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Reality and Knowledge in Voegelin's Political Philosophy. (Volumes I & II).

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REALITY AND KNOWLEDGE IN VOEGELIN'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

VOLUME I

A Dissertation

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in

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by
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To my parents

Sung-Ki and Sang-Kun Baek

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ABSTRACT

It is the primary aim of this dissertation to draw attention to Voegelin's political philosophy and to place it at the center of the conduct of political inquiry, by criticizing positivistic political epistemology. Though scientism had become a dominant commitment, it does not provide an appropriate approach to political knowledge. Making reality dependent on methodology, it neglects important political existence, and fails to ask deeper questions about the truth-content political reality. However, there is an extra-spatio-temporal reality, that we can know, albeit imperfectly, and not discovered by the modern scientific methods.

By means of the restoration and "retheoretization" of the classical Platonic and Aristoteli political philosophy, Voegelin attempts to provide an answer to the discredited positivistic world view of man, politics and history. Voegelin's political philosophy evaluates critically both the methods and the subject matter of political science, explores the human nature and the reality of human existence in society and history, comprehends the relations between knowledge and reality, penetrates the sources of the disorder of society, probes the limits of

instrumental rationality, and establishes an ontological basis for political epistemology.

The dissertation is divided into five chapters. Chapter One is a background study of the epistemological controversies of political inquiry. Chapter Two is an explication of Voegelin's critique of positivism and his redevelopment of the true meanings of science, theory, and philosophy. The third chapter clarifies the main theories of Voegelinian philosophy: political reality. To recount Voegelin's speculation of political reality, the theories of consciousness, representation, and history are examined. Chapter Four reviews Voegelin's account of modernity and gnosticism as a civilizational critique. Chapter Five gives some indication of Voegelin's general position in contemporary political science by appreciating the scope of his "new science of politics" in both critical and constructive dimensions.

Voegelinian "philosophical science of politics" is a new, revolutionary way of political inquiry in that it proffers science in a new mode. It restores a radically new anthropology, i.e., theory of man as man. As a noetic science, it signals the abandonment of the sciences of the external world as the model of the science of man.

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation is a critique of positivist-behavioralist political theorizing in contemporary political science, since I find myself standing on the threshold of the critique that attacks the positivistic political inquiry and believing that political science is continuously shaped and nourished by *the* philosophical traditions. By treating a "philosophical science of politics,"[1] like that developed by Eric Voegelin, as the vigilant reflective enterprise that seeks to revolt against positivistic, scientistic, and empirical mainstream in political science, this work attempts to illumine and investigate Voegelin's approach as an alternative to the contemporary theories of politics which have been dominated by positivistic epistemology.

In this very context, this study was conceived in an endeavor to understand the nature of political knowledge and reality. Many observers have commented that the fundamentally political understanding of political inquiry

[1] Ellis Sandoz refers to the approach of the restorers of the classical tradition of political theory as the "philosophical science of politics." See E. Sandoz, "The Philosophical Science of Politics Beyond Behavioralism, " in George J. Graham, Jr., and George W. Carey, eds., *The Post-Behavioral Era* (New York: David McKay Co, 1972), pp.285-305. The term "traditionalism," which many refer to this approach, may be misleading, for classical political philosophy in its own time was non-traditional and, more importantly, it is now reappropriated not because of its antiquity but because in its method, substance, and direction it is a rationally compelling way to approach the study of politics.

is entirely absent in contemporary political science.[2] So much so is this the case that only a few of today's practicing political inquirers could give a coherent account of what Aristotle meant when he called man a "political animal" (*zoon politikon*). The reason for this inability does not lie in mere forgetfulness or historical inattentiveness; it lies in the theory of knowledge and view of reality which informs political science. The source of this interest is, therefore, engendered by a concern over the appropriate epistemological roots of political theory and the philosophical status of epistemology in political inquiry.

It is the primary aim of this dissertation, therefore, by criticizing positivistic epistemology, to draw attention to Voegelin's political philosophy, which focuses more attention on ontology than on epistemology, as a permanent revolution in political thinking and to place his political philosophy at the center of the conduct of political inquiry. In order to do this, it attempts to trace and examine the themes of Voegelin's political philosophy, and apply the philosophical insights of Voegelin to the epistemological conduct of political inquiry. In short, in an attempt to understand the nature of political knowledge and reality, this work presents a review of the Voegelinian response to the crisis of political inquiry today. It is

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[2] See, for example, Richard Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1976), pp.xxi-xxii.

with a sense of loyalty to the Voegelinian philosophical science of politics that this dissertation is ccnceived and formulated--"loyalty, when enlightened, being a person's willing and thoroughgoing devotion to a cause which should not be confused with fanaticism that dogmatism engenders."[3]

Eric Voegelin is the preeminent political philosopher of the twentieth century whose political writings need to be critically analyzed. The Voegelinian political philosophy occupies a unique place in contemporary political science. His interest in the study of politics developed as a response to certain critical developments of Western political society in the twentieth century which can specifically be identified with totalitarianism in both Soviet Marxism and German Nazism. As expressions of civilizational crisis, such political movements could only, according to Voegelin, be understood through an analysis of specific forms of human consciousness. For "the problems of human order in society and history arise from the order of the consciousness. The philosophy of consciousness is for that reason the centerpiece of a philosophy of politics."[4] Voegelin sees the political philosopher's primary task as one of developing a theory of human consciousness that could account for the character of our modern age. He is very

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[3] Josiah Royce, *The Philosophy of Loyalty* (New York: Macmillan, 1920), pp.16-7. Cited in Hwa Yol Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding: A Phenomenological Perspective in the Conduct of Political Inquiry* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1979), p.3.

[4] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis: Zur Theorie der Geschichte und Politik* (Muenchen: R. Piper & Co., 1966), p.7.

critical of the modern age or of modernity. He sees the tradition of political theory from Plato onward as the decline of the tradition. He also sees that behavioralism has its origins in the positivistic and scientistic tradition and that positivism and scientism are the culmination of modernity's degeneration. Thus, positivism is somehow equated with modern thought generally.

Voegelin's aim is to regain a truth of political order that has been lost through the process of modernization. The task is one of "restoration" and "retheoretization." In developing the theme of "retheoretization," he distinguishes between classical political philosophy as represented in the works of Plato and Aristotle on the one hand and the modern understanding as conceived by positivism on the other. Retheoretization, he insists, would "return political science to the kind of enterprise founded by Plato and Aristotle and overcome the effects of positivism with its emphasis on emulating the methods of natural science and establishing a value-free mode of inquiry."[5] Human existence in society and history is the theme of Voegelin's political philosophy. Three dimensions of human realm of being--man, society, and history--are fields of inquiry which taken together constitute what Voegelin calls political reality. Voegelin defines political science as the "noetic interpretation" of political reality substantially like that given by Plato and Aristotle.

[5] John Gunnell, *Political Theory: Tradition and Interpretation* (Cambridge, MA: Winthrop Publishers, 1979), p.41.

Political science in the Voegelinian sense is concerned with "the elaboration of symbols which assist men in gaining a more differentiated and self-critical understanding of political reality."[6]

The Voegelinian definition of political science, which may therefore be called "political philosophy" or "the philosophy of order," is definitely different from that of the positivistic mainstream of contemporary political discourse. The Voegelinian approach "precludes the understanding of political science in terms of a propositional science of phenomena which operates with axioms, strives to be systematic, and models itself through methodological rigor on the natural and mathematizing sciences of the external world."[7] The noetic interpretation of reality, on the contrary, originates from the tension in political existence which forms between the historically grown self-understanding of a society and the reflective, self-conscious individual thinker's experience of existential order. The "tension" in political reality, therefore, is not "an external object of experience"; rather it is "an inner experience or tension" of the concrete consciousness of specific individual persons who know themselves to be at odds with society with respect to fundamental issues of existence. Thus, the experience of

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[6] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (in German), p.7.

[7] E. Sandoz, "The Foundations of Voegelin's Political Theory," *Political Science Reviewer*, 1 (1971), p.52.

existential tension, or the experience of man's participation in the ground of being, or, in a word, human consciousness, becomes the starting point of Voegelin's thought.

Any assessment of Voegelin as a political theorist, in effect, is also an assessment of the state of political science itself. Testing and seeing the full implications of "philosophical science of politics" as a new way of political theorizing requires, I think, a general redevelopment of political theory based on the Voegelinian political philosophy. It is my primary contention of this dissertation that a philosophical science of politics is able to show why scientism has become a sorcery for contemporary political science and how it might be cured. As an upholding statement, Stanislav Andreski regards "social sciences as sorcery." He writes: "much of what passes as scientific study of human behavior boils down to an equivalent of sorcery." He continues: "More than that of his colleagues in the natural sciences, the position of an 'expert' in the study of human behavior resembles that of a sorcerer who can make the crops come up or the rain fall by uttering an incantation."[8] Voegelin's unique and extraordinary endeavor to explore the human condition in all its dimensions, and his great creative synthesis supply the foundation for "the new science of politics," so that his work is called "revolutionary."

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[8] Stanislav Andreski, *Social Sciences as Sorcery* (New York: St. Martin's, 1972), p.10 and 24.

In its volume and scope many commentators have compared Voegelin's work to Toynbee's, while the depth of his philosophical insight has reminded others of Hegel. Despite the preeminence of his philosophical insight, however, Voegelin is "not nearly so famous as, say, Herbert Marcuse or Angela Davis, nor even so well known as those with whom he is most frequently compared: Spengler, Toynbee, Sorokin, or perhaps Collingwood."[9] And Voegelin has even been misunderstood, because his work refuses to be labelled in any one fixed denomination whatsoever that may imply dogmatic or ideological swindle. For example, Voegelin once catalogued some of the pandemoniac ways his work has been classified:

> On my religious position, I have been classified as a Protestant, a Catholic, as anti-semitic and as a typical Jew; politically as a Liberal, a Fascist, a National Socialist and a Conservative; and on my theoretical position, as a Platonist, a neo-Augustinian, a Thomist, a disciple of Hegel, an existentialist, a historical relativist and an empirical sceptic; in recent years the suspicion has frequently been voiced that I am a Christian.[10]

Indeed, it is not easy to find a label for him and his work, since "he is (in varying degrees) at odds with all schools of thought. He does not fit any of the convenient intellectual pigeon-holes."[11] According to a commentator,

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[9] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1981), p.10.

[10] E. Voegelin, "On Readiness to Rational Discussion," in Albert Hunold, ed., *Freedom and Serfdom* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1961), p.269-84.

[11] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.11.

"he was a scholar of antiquity, a Hellenist and a Latinist, an expert on pre-Christian Near Eastern cultures, a medievalist, a thinker with knowledge of the whole body of modern philosophy, a historian of political philosophy, as well as a philosopher of history and of political thought."[12]

No matter what the causes of the neglect and misunderstanding may be,[13] however, proper understanding of Voegelin's philosophical enterprise is quintessential to the examination of the nature of political science in its full sense. What is primarily intended here is to provide a critical appraisal as it relates to political reality and knowledge. It is not intended to inquire into all the relevant aspects of Voegelin's views on politics. An attempt, however, is made to discuss some of his views on politics so far as they might allude to the epistemological and ontological foundation of his political philosophy. To this end, we shall focus our discussion on Voegelin's seminal work on the study of politics, *The New Science of Politics*. And other major works, including *Order and History*; *Anamnesis*; *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*; and *From Enlightenment to Revolution* will also be scanned. In appreciating Voegelin's thought, it will be presented in a manner which seeks to adhere as much as possible to a single

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[12] Helmut Wagner, *Alfred Schutz: An Intellectual Biography*, p.185.

[13] On the misunderstanding and neglect of Voegelin, see E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, pp.9-18.

language of interpretation and exegesis. By doing so, Voegelin's work will be made to be both familiar and comprehensible to general readers.

The dissertation will be divided into five chapters. Chapter One is a background study of the epistemological controversies of political inquiry. It seeks the answers to questions, such as: "How does epistemological concern become the predominant domain of the theoretical enterprise of political inquiry, while the philosophical ontology of man is relegated to obscurity?" "Why is the positivistic epistemology unsatisfactory in political inquiry?" In this chapter, an attempt is made to review the nature and philosophical roots of the epistemological development of scientism by offering a general outline of its origins, inspirations, and central arguments, and by reconstructing the complex evolution of scientistic tradition.

The second chapter will be an explication of Voegelin's critique of positivism in which he sees positivism as the perversion of science. The true meanings of science, theory, and philosophy, redeveloped by Voegelin as they were used in ancient times, will be reviewed. Voegelin's radically unique critique of positivism, I believe, does offer helpful leads for our reconsideration of the nature of political theory. It is his criticism that makes way for an alternative orientation to the tradition of positivistic epistemology in political inquiry. Moreover, through an appreciation of his critique of positivism, we can examine

scrupulously what I believe are the most important and unique twentieth-century philosophical insights embodying an ontological orientation capable of offering a "new," "revolutionary," but, at the same time, "restoring," understanding of the nature of political inquiry: the Voegelinian philosophical science of politics.

The remaining three chapters are, thus, to clarify some of the theories and conceptualizations used by Voegelin in his analysis of the modern disorder of Western political forms, and his attempt to recapture the classical insights for use in creating a political philosophy that will have relevance for modern times. Our journey through this "philosophical"--in Voegelinian terms--orientation for political inquiry should shed some light on the classical topics of political theory: the questions of human nature, political order and history. The main theories or concepts of Voegelinian philosophy will be clarified in chapters Three to Five respectively: (1) reality and political reality (Chapter Three); (2) modernity and "gnosticism" (Chapter Four); and (3) a scope of the "new science" (Chapter Five). These chapters will show how these have coalesced into the traditional form of Western political order, and how the knowledge of the origins of Western form can be used to find an answer to modern "scientism" and Marxism.

The last part will draw some conclusions with regard to the Voegelin's contribution to the restoration of

philosophical science of politics which, I believe, is the most important twentieth-century philosophical achievement offering a new understanding of the nature of political inquiry.

CHAPTER I

EPISTEMOLOGY AND SCIENTISM

This chapter is an introduction to the questions as to "how epistemological concern becomes the predominant domain of the theoretical enterprise of political inquiry" and "why positivistic political epistemology is unsatisfactory." The chapter begins with a section that reviews, through an account of the distinct features of two approaches to epistemology, the relationships of epistemology to political inquiry. It is followed by a section that reviews the philosophical roots and nature of the epistemological development of scientism which gave shape to the positivistic orientation for political inquiry. The origins and development of scientism in the Western intellectual tradition--in the forms of the Copernican, Galilean, and Newtonian cosmological revolutions, the Cartesian and Lockean epistemology, the Enlightenment movement, and the nineteenth-century positivism--will be examined briefly. I then trace the nature of scientism by defining the term and illustrating its basic tenets. Since this dissertation concerns the work of Eric Voegelin, this chapter may appear as a long digression; however, to indicate some contours of the nature and rise of scientism in the history of

philosophy will help us to understand the general epistemological directions of the movement of positivist political science.

1. CURRENT POLITICAL SCIENCE

The contemporary scene finds "the science of politics" preoccupied with and entangled in a labyrinth of heated controversies over epistemological and methodological problems. The voluminous literature concerning the study of politics emphasizes the "scientism" and the "scientificness" which characterize the modern *Zeitgeist*. Such a pre-occupation would lead to a methodological solipsism, hence to the poverty of creative, constructive political philosophy upon which rest not only the foundation of a political society, but also the guidance and direction of the science of politics. But such an inclination is the inescapable consequence of the nature of ill-defined subject-matter of political inquiry. Exactly what should be the central domain of political inquiry has been sharply debated since Aristotle. At issue is an essential disagreement over what is the proper nature of political discipline and what should be studied by political scientists. For instance, there has been the barrenness of theorizing that tries to maintain the alleged hiatus between empirical and normative theory. In this century

positivistic behavioralism, an offspring of empirical theory, has produced a certain orthodoxy in political science but has found itself under fire from an older tradition of political theory. The conceptual structure of contemporary political science is shaky and confused. At best, the fundamental concepts and methods that dominate contemporary thought and research are unsatisfactory; at worst, the situation could be called a crisis.

The two polarities among antagonists of the recent debate over the proper nature of political science are occupied by the positivists of the behavioral movement and the revivalists of the classical tradition of political theory.[1] Their debates reveal an ongoing concern over what should be, and how we are to understand the nature of political knowledge and reality. It is thus required that political science continue to address itself to questions concerning the appropriate domain of its interest and at the same time its proper epistemological orientation.

The tradition of political theory has seemed to be in "decline" or "dead," "killed by the endeavors of the political behavioralists."[2] Indeed, many forms of

[1] Some commentators emphasize that there is a third voice which is called as "post-behavioralism." It is the indication of a movement that arose in opposition to behavioralism in the 1960s on the immediate grounds of political policy, but more profoundly on grounds of the proper scope and direction of political science. It adopts a principle of dialectic as an alternative to behavioralism and traditionalism. See Scott Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical Theory: Philosophy and Political Inquiry* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Douglas Sturm, "Politics and Divinity: Three Approaches in American Political Science," *Thought*, 52:207 (December 1977), pp.333-365; Hwa Yol Jung, "Phenomenology as a Critique of Politics," *Human Studies*, 5 (1982), pp.161-181; and, Michael B. Kirn, "Bahavioralism, Post-Behavioralism, and the Philosophy of Science: Two Houses, One Plague," *Review of Politics*, 39:1 (January 1977), pp.82-102. However, this movement has not yet attained a solid status as a dominant tradition of political inquiry.

positivist political science had undermined the assurance of traditional political theorists and thus eroded and parochialized the scope of the political discipline. The predominance of positive behavioralism in the twentieth-century political science has seemed to be the victory of the "calculative thinking" of scientism. Inasmuch as "calculative thinking" has been the *Weltanschauung* of modern man and his world, political behavioralism is merely one aspect of its manifestation. The advocates of the behavioral movement, or of the idea of a "science" of politics, did not believe that the classical tradition of Western political theory had yet accomplished much in the way of a systematic and universally applicable causal empirical theory that is coincident with the *Weltanschauung* of modern age. They charged all previous traditional political theories from Plato and Aristotle onward with being hopelessly metaphysical, scientifically imprecise, invalid, unfounded, and confused. Some of them also doubt that political theory ought to be described as a separate field of political science at all. They exhort political science to abandon the "older, theologically-oriented, and 'traditional'" system of thought in favor of the "modern, scientific, empirical, logical, and anti-metaphysical" system of thought.[3] It is only in this fashion, for the

[2] Charles Taylor, "Neutrality in Political Science," in Peter Laslett and W.G. Runciman, eds., *Philosophy, Politics and Society* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1967), p.25.

[3] Eugene Meehan, *The Theory and Method of Political Analysis* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1965), p.237.

behavioralists, that political science can cure and transcend its "malaise and disenchantment" with the classical tradition of political theory. And for them it is only in this fashion that political science can get over its "inferiority complex" in the face not only of the natural sciences, but of the other social sciences as well. John S. Dryzek and Stephen T. Leonard state in a recent essay:

> [P]clitical scientists have often treated the discipline's past as if it were a history of "prescience" or "ideologies" or "philosophy," with the present (or imminent future) bearing witness to the emergence of a real science. It is not only twentieth-century practitioners who have tendered this line. Since Hobbes (at least) it has been widely argued that social and political science is a possibility if not a reality. At the root of these arguments one finds a common belief that science proceeds by following a particular method. Hobbes' method was one of thinking of "men as if but even now sprung out of the earth, and suddenly, like mushrooms, come to full maturity without all kinds of engagement to each other"...Most modern practitioners place their faith in the methodology of the natural sciences. If these methodological aspirations could be realized, they would clearly vindicate those political scientists who read the history of the discipline in terms of modern break from a prescientific past. On this account, the standards against which the materials generated by the historian [of political science] are to be judged would be provided by the scientist. Moreover, the identity of the discipline would be independent of its past, a methodological not a historical matter. The history (or better, prehistory) of political science would have interest only as a source of examples of attempts to articulate a scientifically grounded knowledge of politics.[4]

The positivist mood and its attack on the tradition of political theory came to be seen by many concerned political

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[4] John S. Dryzek and Stephen T. Leonard, "History and Discipline in Political Science," *American Political Science Review*, 82:4 (December 1988), p.1248.

theorists as a threat to the existence of critical thought and to the validity of the classical type of inquiry. In response to the gaining momentum of behavioral movement and to behavioralists' critique of the tradition of political theory, advocates of the revival of political theory who were dissatisfied with the "inadequacies" of the behavioral persuasion criticized both its theoretical assumptions and the spirit of its research. Instead they increasingly emphasized the reality of the classical tradition as a distinct and worthwhile object of political inquiry. The "great transformation" that took place in the 1950s in the study of politics--fundamentally in the works of Eric Voegelin and Leo Strauss--was an attempt to reverse the character attributed to the theoretical enterprise of political inquiry. The transformation involved an attempt to return to and revive the great tradition of political theory from Plato onward. Since Plato, political theory has usually understood itself as a noetic enterprise, guided first and foremost by the faculty of reflective reason rather than by empirical sensation and observation. A certain allegiance to the epistemological primacy of reflective reason, based upon the primacy of ontology over epistemology, clearly sets this tradition apart from the positivist tradition emphasizing epistemological rigor and exactitude.

But it is worth noting here that contemporary political theorists including Eric Voegelin, Leo Strauss, and numerous

others, also acknowledged the fact that traditional political inquiry was in a state of decline. They, however, in contrast with behavioralists, argued that the symptom of the decline of political theory broke out in modern politics and political ideas and particularly in the positivistic tendency of contemporary political science. For them a crisis in modern political philosophy is represented as resulting from certain contemporary attempts to replace the discipline of political philosophy with some non-philosophical or even anti-philosophical science of politics. Establishing a philosophical science of politics is thus Voegelin's response to the crisis of political inquiry due largely to the failure of scientism to take into account the ontological experiential vectors of subjectivity in political inquiry.

The crisis of political inquiry is also a crisis in human existence.[5] It is because every conception of politics or political theory presupposes manifestly or latently some conception or image of man or of human nature. In a word, epistemology presupposes ontology, because, as Hwa Yol Jung argues, "how to know human action must be based on what human action is."[6] This means that a critique of political knowledge presupposes a philosophical ontology of

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[5] Paul Ricoeur, *Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology*, trans. by E.G. Ballard & L.E. Embree (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967), p.162.

[6] Hwa Yol Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1979), p.59.

man. To deny this results in "methodolatry," the worship of method to the exclusion of substance, i.e., in Hilary Putnam's words, the "method fetishism."[7] As John Wild puts it, therefore, "political philosophy must begin with some understanding of the being of man, for its many problems developed from an inclusive grasp of man as he is."[8] Thus, it can be said that the ontology of man or, as it is called by Eric Voegelin, "philosophical anthropology," is the basis of epistemology. And, a critique of political knowledge must be understood in terms of the description of human action as the structure of meaning.

This was the case in the Platonic and Aristotelian tradition. In that period, epistemological concerns have often been subordinated to ontological concerns, the quest after the nature of Being, leaving epistemological questions at a more implicit level of interest. The type of epistemology in that tradition was the transcendental, philosophical, ancient epistemology in which the connection between knowing rightly and doing well is very intimate. Eugene Miller characterizes it as "epistemology, rightly approached."[9] But our thoughts on such matters in these days have a basis which is different from that of the earlier times. The distinctive cast of the modern mind, in

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[7] Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.188.

[8] John Wild, "Foreword" to H.Y. Jung, ed., *Existential Phenomenology and Political Theory: A Reader* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1972), p.ix.

[9] Eugene Miller, "Epistemology and Political Inquiry: Comment on Kress' 'Against Epistemology,'" *Journal of Politics*, 42 (1980), p.1164.

spite of its vagaries, is scientific rather than metaphysical, tending to base itself on observations with the senses. With the advent of the empirical, scientific, and positivistic movements in political inquiry, the questions concerning epistemological orientations became the foremost concerns of practitioners of political inquiry. "Ours is an epistemological century," as Paul Kress writes, for "we want first to know not what but how we know."[10]

Underlying the positivistic movement in the contemporary political inquiry is above all a profound epistemological concern: the quest for "reliable knowledge" of political behavior and events, guided by an empiricist-oriented theory of knowledge and aimed at formulation of nomological propositions about political reality. The positivists identified all truth with the epistemological model of "objective knowledge" produced by scientific method. For them epistemology is important and predominant when narrowed to strictly logical and objective constructs. Epistemology is important in confirming empirical statements regarding matters of fact and in validating the logical and methodological precision of statements which may pertain only incidentally to matters of fact. The type of their epistemology is therefore the positivistic, empirical, modern epistemology. It is characterized by Eugene Miller as "epistemology, wrongly approached."[11] This sort of

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[10] Paul Kress, "Against Epistemology: Apostate Musings," *Journal of Politics*, 41 (1979), p.531.

[11] E. Miller, "Epistemology and Political...," p.1164.

epistemology has indeed been very influential in recent political theory, and it has stood in the way of a direct confrontation with the world of politics.

The goal of the positivistic epistemology is to augment, through use of the scientific method, "objective knowledge of an intersubjectively transmissible character in the social sciences."[12] The proponents of positivistic political epistemology are concerned with objective description and generalization and thus emphasize the methodological ideal of rigor, scientific objectivity, operational exactitude, quantitative measurement, and finally prediction in order to build the citadel of an exact science after the model of the natural and mathematical sciences, especially physics. Moreover, positivistic political inquiry, as is clear from its epistemology-oriented characteristics, points to its indifference to the historicality of science as a human project and the scientist as a human being. It should be noted here that the rise of modern science, or scientism, has been characterized by its reluctance to accept the personal and existential nature of human consciousness, that is, the ontological dimension of human cognition. Rather, it eventually produced a myth which sought to account for the experience of understanding in terms of a methodology of explanation. The refusal of modern science to accept the

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[12] Arnold Brecht, *Political Theory: The Foundations of Twentieth-Century Political Thought* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p.481.

existential nature of human cognition is most evident in the removal of those "life" elements of body, sensing, history, tradition, and emotion from the act of knowing.[13]

I contend, therefore, that the primary source of intellectual mistakes in contemporary political inquiry is the tendency to take the epistemological concern as the most significant, concrete, and relevant arena of the discipline and to regard positivistic epistemology as the only reliable epistemology, while relegating the ontological to the empty, unreal, and abstract. This study is thus intended incidentally to be a contribution toward the needed reintegration of epistemology and ontology in our theoretical enterprise in the context of the Voegelinian philosophical science of politics, while maintaining the primacy of ontology. This reintegration cannot proceed satisfactorily, however, unless the real depth of the problem of political inquiry is appreciated and confronted. The fundamental assumptions that have caused a crisis in the contemporary political inquiry and political society have both a long history and a pervasive theoretical background. As Thomas Spragens writes, "[p]olitical science did not manufacture the assumptions about epistemology and permissible scientific concepts out of whole cloth but rather adopted them from the more general intellectual

[13] The concept of "life" elements has occurred recently in two critiques of scientistic tradition. See Marjorie Grene, *The Knower and the Known* (London: Faber & Faber, 1966); and Hans Jonas, *The Phenomenon of Life: Toward a Philosophical Biology* (New York: Dell Publishing Co., 1966). In both cases it is used to refer to the inability of scientism to explain the simple fact of life--a phenomenon whose telic, appetitive and selective character defies the mechanistic categories of a scientistic ontology.

climate of the time, specifically from philosophy and philosophy of science. As a consequence, unraveling our present dilemmas calls for consideration of the relevant inquiry in these areas."[14]

Superficial reunion of the two halves of the theoretical enterprise--ontology and epistemology--based upon sheer necessity rather than upon genuine understanding, will never ultimately prove viable or durable. To reconsider the nature of political theory, therefore, above all, the long historical legacy and theoretical background which caused difficulty to contemporary political inquiry needs to be carefully considered.

2. EPISTEMOLOGY AND POLITICS

Before it is possible to reconstruct the development of scientistic tradition in political inquiry in the following section, it is surely essential, first of all, to decide in what sense the terms *epistemology* and *scientism* are to be understood. Because the ambiguity which accompanies the characterization of the terms necessitates a preliminary clarification of the topics, "what is epistemology," and "what is scientism," I will consider in this and next

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[14] Thomas Spragens, Jr., *The Dilemma of Contemporary Political Theory: Toward a Postbehavioral Science of Politics* (New York: Dunellen, 1973), p.2.

sections the relationship of epistemology and political inquiry, and also examine the nature of scientism.

Contemporary political theorists have tended in recent decades to mire down in epistemological speculation and consequently have often failed to reach the subject matter and the questions that should be their primary concern. As I have mentioned earlier, a preoccupation with epistemology can distract political theory from its proper tasks and a concern with political discourse and substantive political problems. This contention is also pointed out by Paul Kress in his warning "against epistemology."[15] Kress' contention does not intend to go so far as to deny that political theory can benefit from epistemological studies. The pursuit of epistemology has had beneficial side effects, as Kress acknowledges. Epistemology, in this case onto-epistemology, understood broadly as the rational account of human knowledge, is indeed indispensable to political inquiry as well as beneficial to it. Epistemological reflections help us "to penetrate the special obscurity of political things, to understand political actions that involve knowing, to understand the place of the political sphere within the comprehensive whole, to defend prudence or practical wisdom, and to clarify the nature of political inquiry."[16]

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[15] P. Kress, "Against Epistemology," pp.526-542.

[16] B. Miller, "Epistemology and Political...," p.1167.

However, this is not to deny that epistemology also "may be particularly hostile to the subject matter of politics" and may contain an "element of self-indulgence," and that "there may be a danger...in the reification of epistemology."[17] Political theorists, therefore, need to return from their current obsession with epistemology to the critical study of politics. Yet, to resolve this issue is not so simple because it is uncertain whether these difficulties arise from something intrinsic to epistemology or from a misapplication or misunderstanding of methodology. In order to reach some clarity about the relationship of epistemology and politics, or political inquiry, it is necessary to make clear what we mean by epistemology.

Epistemology, or the theory of knowledge, is a branch of philosophy which is concerned with the nature of knowledge, the character of the procedures we use to attain it, its presuppositions and basis, and the general validity and reliability of claims to knowledge. Although epistemology is but one branch of philosophy, it is a particularly important branch because it plays a part in other branches of philosophy such as ontology (or, metaphysics), and axiology. It is an important aspect, also, of philosophy as applied to other subjects, the philosophy of science and the philosophy of history for example. To be sure, epistemology is an ever-present concern. Epistemological positions are explicitly stated or

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[17] P. Kress, "Against Epistemology," pp.533, 534, 542.

implicitly assumed in every attempt to understand the worlds of fact and value.

It was Plato who can be said to be the real originator of epistemology, for he attempted to deal with the basic questions: What is knowledge? Where is knowledge generally found, and how much of what we ordinarily think we know is really knowledge? Do the senses provide knowledge? Can reason supply knowledge? What is the relation between knowledge and true belief? Plato develops the distinction between genuine knowledge and opinion in the *Republic*. Only the confidence that knowledge differs deeply from opinion makes possible the courageous and persistent pursuit of truth and right. For Plato it was possible to know what is morally right or wrong, good or evil, in personal, social, political, and other realms. Plato took the main purpose of philosophy to be to encourage right conduct, and this was to be achieved by convincing men that they should be good, and also by showing them the way to be good. He did not regard knowledge as separate from ethics, for he held that everyone wanted to be good and that any failure in virtue must, fundamentally, be due to ignorance. The wise understands that his best interest is served by acting virtuously. In short, "one cannot be virtuous without being knowledgeable, and therefore, as Herbert Marcuse has said, for classical Greek philosophy 'epistemology is in itself ethics, and ethics is epistemology.'"[18]

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[18] T. Spragens, *The Irony of Liberal Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), p.10.

In Plato's *Republic*, which stands as "a virtual monument to the nexus between epistemological and political ideas," thus "essentially epistemological theories are developed in the course of asking fundamental political questions."[19] Therefore, it can be said that epistemology in a broad sense, or, more accurately, onto-epistemology, was an integral part of classical political philosophy. With regard to the classical approach to epistemology (onto-epistemology), Eugene Miller presents an account of two features of it:

> First, its inquiry about politics begins not from epistemology but from the data of political life itself--from political things or opinions about them. Epistemological reflections enter as a way of shedding light on these things and on the relationship of philosophical inquiry to political life. Second, the starting point for the epistemology of the classics--its given, so to speak--is the fact of the mind's encounter with being. The mind, having come to know something of things as they exist in the world, turns back critically upon itself to reflect on its own operations--on what we do when we sense and remember and opine and reason. Still, our primary awareness of things is taken to be more certain and more reliable than any account we can give of how things are known or how the mind operates, and the ways of knowing are distinguished in terms of the kinds of things to be known.[20]

Yet, in the modern period, a fundamentally different, that is, characteristically modern approach to epistemology emerged. As Spragens states, revolutions within the tradition of political theory are intimately related to new

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[19] Ibid., p.11.

[20] E. Miller, "Epistemology and Political," pp.1160-1162.

departures in epistemology.[21] The onto-epistemological assumptions of political inquiry prevailing in the ancient and medieval period were attacked by the radically innovative theorists and were consequently superseded by the radically revolutionary epistemology.

Machiavelli (1469-1527), for example, "styled his political essays as a pathbreaking departure from the established mode of conceptualizing political life,"[22] by bringing to the field of political inquiry the scientific spirit of detachment. As for his theoretical writings, particularly *The Prince* and the *Discourses*, Machiavelli employed the scientific method. For him, the study of the political phenomenon must be scientific. It must find its inner laws, and free itself from methodological dependence on theology, metaphysics and moral philosophy. In this sense, he secularized the methodology of political inquiry just as his compatriot--Galileo--secularized that of the physical sciences. Machiavelli's fundamental axiom is simple: human nature is the same always and everywhere. Therefore history, more precisely, the history of particular states or political communities, is also the same.[23] States--like men, the sky, the sun, the elements--never change their motion, order, and power.[24] Because of this

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[21] T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, p.11.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Nicolo Machiavelli, *The Prince and the Discourses*, ed. Max Lerner, *Discourses*, I, ch.39.

[24] Machiavelli, *Discourses*, I, preface.

uniformity it is possible to make comparative analyses, draw valid generalizations, and apply the lessons of the past to the present and the future. Moreover, for Machiavelli, the scientific study of politics is possible only if its principles are derived from fact rather than from speculation. His contention is that "the tradition of political philosophy had been misled by a faulty conception of the relationship between Idea and Reality, between truth and imagination."[25] Therefore such study should focus on "how men live rather than how they ought to live"; on "republics and principalities" that actually exist rather than on those "that have never been seen or known to exist"; in brief, it should produce "the truth of the matter as facts show it rather than the imagination of it."[26] Whereas Plato believed that the well-ordered soul of the man who had seen truth should become the paradigm for ordering the state, Machiavelli felt that the order or disorder within its citizen's soul is immaterial as power becomes an ordering principle in its own right.

One hundred years after Machiavelli the revolution in political epistemology begun by him was provided a much more systematic foundation through the work of the British political philosopher, Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679). In a number of places, Hobbes stated that the mathematical and scientific model is the best foundation for accomplishing

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[25] T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, p.11.

[26] Machiavelli, *The Prince*, ch.15.

the tasks of formulating a "solid philosophy" and a "sound commonwealth." The "new science" in the sense of the seventeenth-century scientists, was the model for his science of "politique bodies," and the political insights he felt could be gained through a new manner of knowing might enable men to extricate themselves from the political miseries of their "natural condition,"[27] or, as he called, the "state of nature." Hobbes' ambition, as Ernst Cassirer points out, was "to create a theory of the body politic equal to the Galilean theory of physical bodies--equal in clarity, in scientific method, and in certainty."[28] After Galileo and Descartes, Hobbes emulated the ideal of mathematics as the universal science (*mathesis universalis*). Above all else, Hobbes attempted to orient political philosophy according to the principles of mathematics. He founded the "mathematics of politics." In the theory of politics, he constructed the political system where the human body (and consequently the body politic) is treated merely as a physical mechanism (i.e., mechanistic psychology). What really mattered for Hobbes was that we should determine commonwealths and norms according to the mathematical procedure of reasoning. Therefore the task was to apply men's actions so that a consistency or pattern

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[27] T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, p.12.

[28] Ernst Cassirer, *The Myth of the State* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1946), p.165.

could be reached according to preestablished rules governing commonwealths.[29]

In short, although epistemology continued to be an integral part of political philosophy in the modern era, the modern approach, as formulated by such leading philosophers (whatever their differences) as Bacon, Hobbes, Descartes, Locke, Hume, and Kant, departed radically from the classical approach. Epistemology began to move on "the cusp between science and rival doctrines in theology and metaphysics." And, as John Gunnell writes, it became "a means of advancing one position and undercutting contending ones."[30] The eventual demarcation of philosophy from science, and, in other words, elimination of ontological foundation from onto-epistemology was thus made possible by the notion that philosophy's core was epistemology, a theory distinct from the sciences because it was their foundation. Without this idea of an epistemology, it is hard to imagine what "philosophy" could have been in the age of modern science. Metaphysics had been displaced by physics. Philosophy gave up some of its domain to science. Philosophy, at one time thought to comprise all fields of knowledge and called "the most general science," was regarded as a critique of the foundations of knowledge in an attempt to establish its authority. It took up what science no longer pursued: the

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[29] Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, ed. Michael Oakeshott, p.110.

[30] John G. Gunnell, "In Search of the Political Object: Beyond Methodology and Transcendentalism," in John S. Nelson, ed., *What Should Political Theory Be Now?* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1983), p.32.

search for a methodological legitimating authority. The modern minds wished to establish epistemology as the foundation of the sciences, including moral or political science. In a word, "the foundations of knowledge became the philosophical problem of epistemology, and methodology became part of the philosophy of science."[31]

Consequently, modern epistemology became increasingly divorced from substantive claims of knowledge, which is essential in onto-epistemological enterprise. Rather, it became instrumental arguments. And it legitimated certain concrete empirical claims so that it was called an empirical epistemology and meaningless when divorced from those claims. Therefore, in the age of modern science, the characteristically modern assumption that epistemology must be taken up before ontology was widely recognized. As the Scottish philosopher James Frederick Ferrier (1808-1864), who seemed to introduce the term "epistemology" itself for the first time,[32] puts it:

> the ontological question, "What is?" is the ultimate question of philosophy and also the first to make its appearance, but it must be postponed until the problem of knowledge has been solved. The question of being or existence "...cannot be approached, or even looked at," until we have "exhausted all the details of a thorough and systematic epistemology."[33]

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[31] Ibid., p.33.

[32] E. Miller, "Epistemology and Political...," p.1161n.

[33] James Frederick Ferrier, *Philosophical Works*, vol.I: *Institutes of Metaphysics*, 3rd ed., (London: William Blackwood and Sons, 1875), pp.48-49. Quoted from E. Miller, "Epistemology and Political...," p.1161n.

In the view of the modern mind, scientific inquiry cannot properly begin either from opinion or from natural cognition, for as Francis Bacon explains, "Idols and false notions are now in possession of the human understanding, and have taken deep root therein."[34] There are impediments of knowing which may prevent a man from knowing clearly. These are especially noticeable when emotion, personal interests, or outside pressures are present to lead our philosophy to be biased, but they are especially likely to influence and to distort our fund of common-sense opinions. This is the starting point by which the classical distinction between knowledge and opinion was blurred as axiomatic, demonstrative certainty ceased to be the criterion of scientific knowledge.

It is worthwhile to briefly note here Francis Bacon's presentation of a classical statement of "the errors of knowing" in his famous "Idols of the mind."[35] There are, first, the Idols of the tribe. Men are prone to recognize evidence and incidents which are favorable to their own side or group (tribe or nation). That is, there is a tendency to accept what has been hallowed by tradition or to let the passions interfere with the acquisition of rational knowledge. The second Idols, those of the cave, are those which arise from the particular viewpoint of the individual

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[34] Francis Bacon, *The New Organon and Related Writings*, ed. Fulton H. Anderson, *New Organon*, I. p.38.

[35] F. Bacon, *The Great Instauration*, Part II.

which often precludes a more general perspective. Because of the Idols of the cave, we tend to see ourselves as the center of the world and to stress our own limited outlook. Third, the Idols of the market-place are linguistic, the market place being the symbol for social interaction which is often at variance with reality and thus, again, an obstruction to rational understanding. In other words, the Idols of the market-place cause us to be influenced by the words and names with which we are familiar in everyday discourse. We are led astray by emotionally toned words--in our society such words as communist or radical. Finally, the Idols of the theater are the dogmatic conceptions of former times which, given the absence of any empirical foundation, are no better than dramatic fictions. They arise from our attachment to parties, creeds, and cults. These fads, fashions, and school of thought are like stage plays in the sense that they lead us into imaginary worlds; ultimately, the Idols of the theater lead us to biased conclusions.

For Bacon, the understanding is obstructed not only by received dogmas and by the defects of ordinary language, but also by forces in the individual man or in human nature itself that cause the understanding to distort and discolor the nature of things. Inquiry in the sciences, therefore, must have a method that will purge the mind of doubtful opinions and guard it from error, and this method is to be supplied by a philosophical analysis of the mind itself.

Statements about the efficacy of experimental, inductive method, which became intimately associated with the definition of natural science, was appealed to formulate distinctions between scientific and non-scientific knowledge. Due to the absence of a proper method, Bacon thinks, the science and philosophy in the past was unsuccessful. Therefore, not only must the mind be freed and cleared of such idols and approach the task of knowledge pure and unadulterated, but also a new way of reaching knowledge, a new instrument or organ for the mind, or, a new logic, a *novum organum* has to be devised, because the traditional syllogistic logic is thought to be useless for scientific discovery. The traditional logic only assists in confirming and rendering inveterate the errors founded on vulgar notions rather than in seeking after truth.

Assumptions about scientific method that scientific method was represented as accessible, single and transferable[36] or "method fetishism" as Hilary Putnam phrases[37] derived, to a large extent, from a Baconian framework. Bacon attempted to outline an approach to the study of society based on observation. Hitherto, human understanding obscured by what he called idols, had been

[36] These three characterizations of scientific method respectively claim that the method of science could be understood and practised by a large number of people; that there was a single method common to all branches of science; and that this method could be extrapolated from natural science to other subjects. See, Richard R. Yeo, "Scientific Method and the Rhetoric of Science in Britain, 1830-1917," in John A. Schuster and Richard R. Yeo, eds., *The Politics and Rhetoric of Scientific Method: Historical Studies* (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1986), p.262.

[37] H. Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, p.188.

mistaken, irrational conceptions. In this sense, Bacon can be acknowledged as the individual who for the first time clearly comprehended the new modern scientific spirit and successfully advertised its salient features. And the influence of Bacon's work was the starting point for later development of the philosophy of science.[38] In other words, after Bacon's references to methodological issues, discourses on methodology became an important aspect of the modern scientific tradition. The Baconian theory of idols lies at the origin of modern social science. It strongly influenced both the English empirical tradition in Hobbes and Locke and the French Enlightenment which eventually produced the concept of ideology. And, at the same time, discussion of scientific methodology has been closely associated with the general epistemological concerns of modern scientistic tradition. "Epistemology thus comes to be understood as the precondition for scientific inquiry and as the final arbiter of claims to knowledge in the sciences."[39]

This modern approach to epistemology not only redefines the relationship of epistemology to the sciences; it also leads to a transformation in the procedure of epistemology itself. As a distinct field, epistemology in the modern period, which radically deviated from onto-epistemology, began as "sloughed off elements of scientific discourse:

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[38] R.R. Yeo, "Scientific Method and...," p.263.

[39] E. Miller, "Epistemology and Political...," p.1162.

arguments without function, substance, or concrete context."[40] Modern epistemology also comes to focus "not on the mind's uncertain knowledge of things but on the operations of the mind and on its contents--its 'ideas' and 'impressions' and 'concepts'--taken in abstraction from things external to the mind."[41] Starting from what we can know clearly and distinctly of the mind and its contents, modern epistemology attempts to prove that we can know external things, to show how we can know them, and to establish with finality the limits of our knowledge.

3. AN EPISTEMOLOGICAL FALL: MODERN SCIENCE AND MODERN PHILOSOPHY

The positivistic orientations for political inquiry have been influenced by the epistemological transformation accompanying the rise of modern science and modern philosophy. In order to understand the general epistemological directions of the movement of positivist political science, therefore, some contours of the rise of modern science and scientism in the history of philosophy need to be examined. Thus, this section briefly reconstructs the complex evolution of scientistic tradition

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[40] J. Gunnell, "In Search of the Political Object...," p.33.

[41] Ibid.

in the modern period which gave shape to the positivistic political inquiry.

The Rise of Modern Epistemology

The crisis in contemporary political discipline is a chronic crisis which manifests itself in long standing internal dissensions which can be traced back to the very beginnings of modern science and beyond. In other words, a crisis in modern political theory is implicated in a crisis of modernity which has been in course of development for several centuries. The attempt to resolve the modern crisis cannot proceed satisfactorily, therefore, unless we refer to the intellectual history of that crisis. Positivism is commonly supposed to have originated in the nineteenth century with Auguste Comte. Yet, it is misleading because "the positive philosophy" and "the positive method", if not the very word "positivism", have origins in the Middle Ages[42] and historically they are generally associated with the rise of modern science. They also owe much to the empiricist philosophers, especially, to David Hume, and to the Enlightenment *philosophes*. The positivist doctrines were, then, after a number of other modifications, eventually labelled "logical positivism" in the twentieth century Austria and Britain.

Viewed in this way, positivism, more generally, scientism, does not begin with Comte, but has a long history

[42] John Wellmuth, S.J., *The Nature and Origins of Scientism* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1944).

in Western philosophy.[43] Positivism is equated here with modern thought generally. Thus the emergence of political behavioralism as a dominant movement or mood in contemporary political science can be seen as a culmination not only of the positivist spirit of the late nineteenth century but also even of the general movement toward a scientistic culture in the West since the Renaissance. In other words, the epistemological roots of scientism are discernable in the rise of modern science and modern philosophy which can be traced back to the very beginnings of modern mathematics and physics as early as in the second half of the sixteenth century. The scientific revolution of the late sixteenth and the seventeenth centuries is the most significant point of division between the medieval and the modern minds. The eminent historian, Herbert Butterfield, gives this assessment of the scientific revolution:

> It outshines everything since the rise of Christianity and reduces the Renaissance and Reformation to the rank

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[43] With regard to the use of the term "positivism," I distinguish two main ways in which it may be taken, one quite specific, the other much more general. In the more restrictive sense, the term may be taken to apply to the writings of those who have actively called themselves positivists. The positivism in a restrictive sense has been dominated by the works of the author who coined the term "positive philosophy", Auguste Comte, and of the "logical positivists" of the Vienna Circle. But the positivism in a more broad and diffuse sense, which I rely on here, refers to the thought of philosophers who have adopted most or all of a series of connected perspectives: for example, basic tenets of scientism which is reviewed in the next section. Positivistic strains are much more widely represented in the history of philosophy, overlapping with empiricism, than would be suggested if attention were confined to self-proclaimed "positivism". Richard Bernstein acknowledges that, strictly speaking, Anglo-Saxon social scientists are not positivists, if we define positivism in the strict sense of either Comte or the Vienna Circle. He says, however, that they have a "positivist temper" which has had a profound influence upon them. "Basically, the positivist temper recognizes only two models for legitimate knowledge: the empirical or natural sciences, and the formal disciplines such as logic and mathematics." See, R. Bernstein, *The Restructuring of Social Political Theory*, p.5. To evade the ambiguity, the self-proclaimed positivism is identified here as "modern positivism" or "logical positivism."

> of mere episodes, mere internal displacements, within the system of medieval Christendom. Since it changed the character of men's habitual operations even in the conduct of the nonmaterial sciences, while transforming the whole diagram of the physical universe and the very texture of human life itself, it looms so large as the real origin both of the modern world and of the modern mentality that our customary periodisation of European history has become an anachronism and an encumbrance.[44]

An epistemological shift that occurred at the beginning of the modern age and laid the foundation on which the edifice of modern science was reared is of particular significance for us because it paved the way for a change of the modern minds in theory, in world-view, in metaphysical outlook, in conception and method of knowledge, and even in ways of living. To understand this event historically, therefore, we need to turn our attention back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These centuries are, according to Hans Jonas' description, "a time not only pregnant with change but also conscious of it, with a will for it, and with the polemical animus that turns against the old in the name of the new and hails the break with the past."[45]

However, in order to take account of the rise of modern science, it seems necessary, to a certain degree, to extend our attention beyond the modern age, because medieval

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[44] Herbert Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science: 1300-1800*, rev. ed. (New York: Free Press, 1957), pp.5-7.

[45] Hans Jonas, "The Scientific and Technological Revolutions," *Philosophy Today*, 15:2 (Summer 1971), p.77.

thought is said to have given birth to and given expression to the fundamental ideas of scientism. As is well known, throughout the Middle Ages all the branches of knowledge, metaphysics, logic, ethics, politics and economics were held together in one coherent whole through the mediation of the Christian religion or theology. Consequently, in the early modern period the epistemological concerns of the Western mind were ultimately related with religious criticism. The new developments in the natural sciences in this period, typified especially by the works of Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton, gave powerful impetus to the medieval dominance of Christianity. But the medieval Church did not clearly perceive the inherent separateness of science and faith and proceeded instead to war against modern science for several centuries in an ultimately losing battle. However, it should be noted here that the medieval era was not absolutely unresponsive to the inevitable distinction between science and faith. With regard to this point, it is worth noting Harold J. Berman's arguments:

> in Western civilization, where science has flourished more than in any other culture (indeed, some would say it has flourished *too* much), the objectivity, skepticism, openness, and general spirit of rationalism that characterize scientific inquiry have stemmed from a complex relationship between the sacred and the profane. On the one hand, a belief in the sacredness, or potential sacredness, of all things, such as existed among the Germanic peoples and also in Eastern Christianity, inhibits objective, skeptical, open, rational investigation. Thus it was no accident that the first Western sciences emerged at the time when there was a separation between ecclesiastical and

secular politics.[46]

According to Berman, the "de-divinization of the world," to use Eric Voegelin's phrase,[47] fostered by the emphatic separation of ecclesiastical and secular politics, gave rise to the first Western sciences. He states that the tradition of scientific inquiry first emerged precisely in the ecclesiastical sphere--in canon law and in theology itself--not the secular. That is, Berman argues that the first Western sciences--not the modern sciences in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but that which is called the progenitors of the modern sciences--arose in the ecclesiastical sphere in the work of such Western theologians of the late eleventh and twelfth centuries as Anselm, Abelard, and others. They subjected the evidence of divine mysteries to systematic, rational, and even skeptical examination.[48] In other words, "what gave rise to scientific values was not the carving out of a sphere of life--the secular, the temporal, the material--which could be investigated without risk to religious beliefs, but

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[46] Harold J. Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.158.

[47] E. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics: An Introduction* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p.107. Hereafter abbreviated as *NSP*. See, E. Sandoz, "Book Review: *Law and Revolution*," *Louisiana Law Review*, 45 (1985), p.1119. On the Voegelinian sense of "de-divinization" will be considered later, in Chapter Four.

[48] For example, "Anselm sought to prove 'by reason alone,' without the aid of faith or revelation, not only the existence of God but also the necessity of his incarnation in Christ. Abelard exposed the self-contradictions in sacred writings--a first step toward scientific Biblical criticism." H.J. Berman, *Law and Revolution*, p.158.

rather a new attitude toward the sacred itself. The Church, though still understood to be the 'mystical body of Christ,' was viewed as also having a visible, legal, corporate identity and an earthly mission to reform the world."[49] Berman continues:

> The emphasis shifted from sacredness in the sense of otherworldliness to the incarnation of the sacred, which meant its manifestation in the political, economic, and social life of the times. That, in turn, made it necessary to examine the sacred, the spiritual, with scientific value premises. Only when the effort was made to study God objectively, and God's laws, did it become possible to attempt to study secular life, and secular laws, objectively--and eventually nature and nature's laws.[50]

Diogenes Allen also writes that "it is part of the world of the Middle Ages, not part of the world of the Renaissance or the Reformation, which is usually regarded as the beginning of the transition from the medieval to the modern world."[51] Another commentator, examining the origins of scientism, supports this contention by saying that the movement called scientism was:

> the natural outcome of a trend of thought which began in the early Middle Ages, which was strongly opposed by St. Thomas during his lifetime, and which ultimately led to the breakdown of medieval philosophy before the end of the fourteenth century, at a time when the traditional fathers of modern science had still about

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[49] Ibid., p.158.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Diogenes Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding Theology* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1985), p.151.

two centuries to wait before being born.[52]

> Thus, before the end of the fourteenth century, though the positive sciences were only beginning to develop, we have the essential features of the modern scientific method with its emphasis on probability as the ideal of scientific knowledge, and the essential characteristic of scientism at least in this negative sense, that the whole field of human knowledge, apart from revealed truth and theology, was to be explored by other than philosophic means because philosophy had failed.[53]

What is to be noted, however, is that "an obvious tension between the sacred and the profane in the theology of the church and in the canon law" also existed in other branches of learning, and "inevitably imposed severe restrictions on scientific value premises." It should be added that "it is hardly necessary to recall the repressive measures taken against scientists who departed from official dogma. The original thinker, the innovator, ran severe risks of condemnation; the heretic might be executed. It is of little comfort, yet it is important, to know that the very tension that caused such repression also made possible the first growth of science in the West."[54] Consequently, questions concerning the validity of theological claims were given a new seriousness with the dissolution of the formally unified dominant Christianity in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The intellectual and creative talent

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[52] J. Wellmuth, *The Nature and Origins of Scientism* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1944), p.19.

[53] Ibid., p.47-8.

[54] H.J. Berman, *Law and Revolution*, p.159.

that for almost a millennium had served the interest of God and the Church thus began to redirect toward the secular, terrestrial things of this world, that is, nature and man. These developments provided not only inspiration for further speculation on the validity of theological interpretations of man and the world, but also a new model of understanding and investigation.

And this new model became a source of understanding what is the basis for a claim of knowledge, if not at times a formal standard for knowledge claims altogether. The triumphal success of the natural scientific understanding of nature secured thereafter the dominance of its mode of understanding as an epistemological model for understanding as such. Its understanding of knowledge was carried over and applied abstractly in politics, theology, and other fields of investigation. In all important realms of modern thought, therefore, one finds that epistemological and methodological considerations do not play a mere secondary role. Rather, these concerns are bound up immediately with substantive concerns and in fact seek to give direction to the substantive branches of thought.

Through the rise of modern science the conception of knowledge as "completely impersonal, explicit and permanent"--"the ideal of total objectivity"--powerfully impressed upon Western minds.[55] In terms of the ideal of total objectivity, as Polanyi has put it, we suppose that if

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[55] M. Grene, *The Knower and the Known*, p.17.

we had an infinite blackboard we could write down one after another in final and precise form all the knowledge there is to be known.[56] The optimism of the seventeenth century and the Enlightenment have contributed mainly to the form of this ideal, which has dominated philosophical thought in the last few centuries. In characterizing the epistemological foundations of scientism, three chief versions of the ideal of knowledge, as were discerned by Marjorie Grene, need to be identified: i.e., in the philosophies of Plato, Aristotle and Descartes. Even though for all three knowledge is final and certain, the criteria for certainty are radically different from each other.

> [W]hat makes Platonic certainty possible is the eternity, the superior, intrinsic reality, of its transcendent object, itself by itself, apart from relativity, contradiction, or decay. This is certainty beyond, even against, the world. What makes Aristotelian certainty possible is the secure natures of kinds of things within the real world itself, and ultimately the eternity of the world itself; it is certainty within the world. Cartesian certainty, finally, relies neither on a really real beyond the world, nor on rootedness in the structure of the world itself. It is the pure, intrinsic certainty of the knowing intellect itself, needing no support beyond the luminous self-evidence of its own act of knowing.[57]

The modern scientific tradition, of which epistemology is represented by Cartesian certainty, is characteristically said to originate in what Whitehead called the "century of

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[56] Michael Polanyi, "Commitment to Science," Lecture delivered at Duke University, Feb. 24, 1964, p.2. Quoted from M. Grene, *The Knower and the Known*, p.17.

[57] Ibid.

genius." Francis Bacon, Descartes, Hobbes, Locke, Newton, and Galileo were all part of that remarkable seventeenth century intellectual revolution which shaped the contours of our reigning scientific tradition. These giants accomplished the destruction of the desiccated and increasingly sterile medieval world view and simultaneously replaced it with their "bright new world," translucent to the mathematizing mind.

Indeed, modern science started mainly with the reform of cosmology. The new cosmology replaced the geocentric system by a heliocentric one through the hypothesis of a double, axial and orbital, movement of the earth, with the resultant simplification of theory compared to the cumbersome Aristotelian scheme.[58] Several weak points in the Aristotelian cosmology, for example, the faulty notion of change and causality, to be sure, led to persistent dissatisfaction in many quarters from as early as the fourteenth century. Despite this recurrent dissatisfaction, however, no new model had been developed that was itself adequate enough to commend widespread acceptance as a substitute. Since, to borrow Thomas Kuhn's words, "the

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[58] In Aristotelian cosmology, the concept of heavenly spheres was closely connected with the axiom that all cosmic motion is circular. This idea had gained the quality of a metaphysical principle and become wedded to ideas of perfection which were associated with the geometrical properties of the circle. The two a priori requirements, therefore, which every cosmic motion had to satisfy were circularity of path and uniformity of speed. Therefore, in Aristotelian physics, motion was subsumed under the ontological category of change. The Aristotelian cosmology was thus not only the basis for scientific thought, but also for philosophical speculation and even for poetic imagination. See, T. Spragens, *The Dilemma of Contemporary Political Theory*, pp.23-28; H. Jonas, "The Scientific and Technological Revolutions," p.86; and, Jennifer Trusted, *An Introduction to the Philosophy of Knowledge* (London: Macmillan, 1981), pp.48-65.

decision to reject one paradigm is always simultaneously the decision to accept another,"[59] the situation remained unresolved.

It was not until the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the authority of Aristotelian cosmology was replaced by a new method and a new view of the universe. An illustrious group of scientists, including Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton, finally produced the conceptual breakthrough by producing a new paradigm by which to understand physical motion. They established scientific observation and experimentation on a firm foundation. Thus the scientific changes are often spoken of as the Copernican revolution, Galilean revolution, or Newtonian revolution. Copernicus pointed out that the sun is the center of our solar system and that the earth is one of the planets. Galileo accepted the atomic theory and established the science of mechanics on an experimental and mathematical basis. Newton's astronomy and mechanics brought the newer developments together in one grand synthesis. Their achievements were monumental; however, they contained weaknesses that became evident only later, overshadowed as they were by the early brilliant successes of the tradition. Ironically, the late sixteenth and seventeenth-century developments both provided the impetus and tools for the unparalleled achievements of modern natural science and in

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[59] Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed., (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), p.77.

the process began, again in Whitehead's words, the "ruin" of modern philosophy,[60] or the crisis of modern philosophy.

The import of the intellectual turn in the seventeenth century is so profound and so fraught with consequences that it calls for some elaboration. Since considering the validity of the epistemological foundations of modern science requires an account of this intellectual transformation, its progress and principal implications warrant a review. Therefore, in examining the new outlooks of the first trail blazers of the scientific revolutions in the sixteenth and seventeenth century--men like Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Newton, and others--the direct conceptual content of the theoretical revolution in Copernican and Galilean physical cosmology and Newtonian dynamics will be analytically summarized.

The Scientific Revolution in the 17th Century

Since in the Middle Ages all the branches of knowledge were held together under the authority of the Church in one coherent whole, Copernicus' new theory that the sun, not the earth, is at the center of the universe, is not a mere scientific hypothesis. It is socially revolutionary and threatens the entire Aristotelian-Christian rationale for the social and moral order. The epistemological change underlying the reform of cosmology therefore merits the name of a scientific "revolution" in its own right. Copernicus,

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[60] Alfred North Whitehead, *Science and the Modern World* (New York: Mentor Books, 1948). p.56.

Galileo and others, as Hans Jonas maintains, didn't undertake their experiments with practical intent: instead, "their intent was to gain knowledge," even though "the method of knowledge itself, by the active intercourse with its object, anticipated utilization for practical ends."[61] However, it should be noted that, even if certain implications of the new theory were not at all on its inventor's mind, it inevitably led to a new revolutionary physical cosmology far beyond any merely mathematical reinterpretation of astronomical data. Therefore, as Thomas Spragens points out, "the revolution in cosmology suggested the need for a radically refashioned epistemology."[62]

Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543) placed the sun at the center of the universe. The best way to get a clear grasp of the apparent movements of the planets in the heavens was by regarding them as movements around the sun conceived as stationary. However, it was not a claim about the actual position of the sun in relation to the planets. His aim was only the ease of making mathematical calculations.[63] In advocating a new theory of the universe, therefore, Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) was far more radical. He not only viewed the sun as the actual center of the universe but also abandoned the Aristotelian conception of uniform circular motion for the planets. This was truly daring, for it meant

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[61] H. Jonas, "The Scientific and Technological...," p.76.

[62] T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, p.25.

[63] D. Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding...*, p.161.

that the heavens did not move because of their natural circular motion (in imitation of an unmoved mover).

For him it was apparent from observations of the sun that the apparent path of the sun against the background of the fixed stars differed in speed at different times of the year, but that the angular velocity of this movement was always the same at the same point in the astronomical year, and therefore that the speed of rotation of the straight line earth-sun was always the same when it pointed to the same region of the fixed stars. It was thus legitimate to suppose that the earth's orbit was a self-enclosed one, described by the earth in the same way every year--which was by no means obvious a priori. For Kepler, an advocate of the Copernican system, it was thus as good as certain that this must also apply to the orbits of the rest of the planets.

In a word, the heavens moved in elliptical orbits, and accelerated and decelerated along the path. This implied that some physical explanation had to be found for their motion: a physical explanation outside of those possible in Aristotelian physics. Kepler was also led to his view of the planetary orbits by the most meticulous concern for mathematical accuracy. "The exactness or rigour with which the causal harmony must be verified in phenomena is the new and important feature in Kepler."[64] The one thing clear to

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[64] Edwin Arthur Burtt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science: A Historical and Critical Essay*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967, originally published in 1924), p.53.

all from the emergence of the radically refashioned cosmology was that Aristotelian physics no longer applied to the altered scheme of things. Movements were no longer explained by forms of order; instead, the form of movement had to be explained by the action of forces. Copernicus' and Kepler's endeavours led to Galileo's work which broke the hold of the Aristotelian hierarchical world view.[65]

Galilei Galileo's (1564-1641) achievement in completing a new paradigm won virtually universal acclaim among the intellectual luminaries of his day and gained for him such encomiums as Hobbes' designation of him as "the first that opened to us the gate of natural philosophy universal."[66] As an instance, by addressing himself to the motion of projectiles and falling bodies, Galileo developed a radically new conception of motion which broke with the Aristotelian conception of motion (as a change from potency to act).[67] The new illumination provided by Galileo's explanation "relegated the classic potential-actual model of Aristotle with its profound ramifications to the status of obscurantist nonsense."[68] Galileo treated quantitative relations as more important than qualitative ones, which had primacy in Aristotle. Galileo gave a mathematical relation

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[65] D. Allen, *Philosophy for Understanding...*, p.162.

[66] T. Hobbes, *English Works*, William Molesworth, ed. (London: John Bohn, 1839), I, p.viii.

[67] Galileo postulated inertial motion (in a circle) and a speed of free fall which was independent of the weight of the falling object.

[68] T. Spragens, *The Dilemma of...*, p.25.

for bodies in motion. The crucial revolutionary element was to treat time as an abstract parameter of motion. That is, time is freed of all associations with the mind and all associations with growth (a passage from potency to act). Time is treated simply in relation to velocity and distance. It is simply a mathematical term in relation to velocity and distance. With this shift Galileo could give a precise and general mathematical statement of a law applicable to all falling bodies. In other words, with him mathematical relationships were reduced to mere expressions of mechanical laws. Indeed, Galileo performed his great intellectual feat by abstracting from the sense manifestations of motion to its mathematically manipulatable components. He considered only the mathematical properties of bodies as essential and objectively present in bodies. All other properties of bodies as they appear to our senses, such as color, texture, smell, taste, are the result of the size, shape, and motion of matter on our sense organs.

For Galileo nature was seen as a simple, orderly system, whose every proceeding is thoroughly regular and inexorably necessary. According to him, the conclusions of natural science are absolutely true and necessary, not at all dependent on human judgment. Further, he believed that the rigorous necessity in nature results from its fundamentally mathematical character: that is, nature is the domain of mathematics. Galileo's idea of mathematical

supremacy is illustrated in the following statement:

> Philosophy is written in that great book which ever lies before our eyes---I mean the universe---but we cannot understand it if we do not first learn the language and grasp the symbols, in which it is written. This book is written in the mathematical language, and the symbols are triangles, circles, and other geometrical figures, without whose help it is impossible to comprehend a single word of it; without which one wanders in vain through a dark labyrinth.[69]

The geometricization of movement, with its remarkable success, had the most far reaching and profound consequences for Western philosophy, both in its procedural and in its substantive implications.[70] Cosmologically, this conceptual transformation resulted, quite literally, in draining the world of its substance, for the whole notion of substance in the Aristotelian and scholastic world view was inextricably connected with the understanding of motion as finite change to a specified end, completion, and rest. A particular substance was seen as composed of the defining boundaries of a particular motion.

With the infinitizing of motion on the Galilean model,[71] however, the function of substances disappeared and

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[69] *Opere Complete di Galileo Galilei*, Firenze, 1842, vol.IV, p.171. Quoted in E. A. Burtt, *The Metaphysical Foundations of Modern Physical Science*, p.64.

[70] H. Butterfield, *The Origins of Modern Science*, p.15.

[71] More accurately speaking, the world was seen by most seventeenth-century thinkers as "indefinite" or "indeterminate," rather than as strictly "infinite." They saw the universe, even if not infinite, had to be much bigger than had been supposed. See, Alexandre Koyre, *From the Closed World to the Infinite Universe* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958). However, this distinction is irrelevant to our present concern.

the modern world had no need of that hypothesis. Thus, the domain of sciences of substance was encroached by the propositions of sciences of phenomena. Galileo was the forerunner who formulated "the phenomenalist program for knowledge as opposed to the traditional interpretation of the world in terms of substantial forms."[72] Having dissolved the configurations of substance,[73] the infinite, mathematicized view of motion served as the indicator of the proper replacement for the whatnesses, quiddities, and entities that had composed the premodern cosmos."[74] Infinite, mathematicized, and abstract motions clearly belonged in an infinite, mathematicized, and abstract world. Despite a radical reversal in content, formally this inference from the nature of motion to the nature of the world directly paralleled the reasoning within the supplanted world view.

The conceptual revolution incited by the intellectual talents of the late sixteenth and seventeenth century effected a full-fledged mechanics of nature: the Newtonian physics. Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727), who joined heaven and earth under one rubric, succeeded in showing that the same mathematical formulae can be applied to all bodies in

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[72] Leszek Kolakowski, *The Alienation of Reason: A History of Positivist Thought*, trans. by Norbert Guterman (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1968), p.18.

[73] With regard to the dissolution of the configurations of substance in modern science, Voegelin characterizes the scientism as "the attempt to treat substance (including man in society and history) as if it were phenomenon." E. Voegelin, "The Origins of Scientism," *Social Research*, 15:4 (1948), pp.463-464.

[74] T. Spragens, *The Dilemma of...*, p.25.

the same fashion, whether they are cannon balls or planets in the solar system. It was not until Newton's *Principia Mathematica* (1687) that the fruitfulness of mathematical accuracy proclaimed by his predecessors was thoroughly vindicated. As such, Newton might be said to complete, but not alter, the basic character of Galileo's treatment of an object's motion in time. To use abridged labels, it means completing the Galilean revolution with the Newtonian record. In short, Newton reached his epoch-making discoveries of dynamics; and thus this epoch has been presided over by the concepts of Newtonian cosmology and Newtonian method.

Epistemologically, Newtonian science of nature represented the union of a priori with a posteriori elements: while space, time and motion *in abstracto* present a pure mathematical manifold for a priori construction, inertia and gravity, the dynamical ingredients of mass--and the same goes for the electromagnetic forces discovered later--fall as to their existence and their actual values in the realm of irreducible empirical fact; in short, the gravitational constant is a purely empirical magnitude. But since those empirical constants operate in the mathematical continuum, their values are expressible in its terms. And so physics could be mathematized with these rationally recalcitrant facts. The discoveries in physics made by Newton had received lofty acclaim and had given rise to a reigning world view. According to the Newtonian cosmology,

the real character of the universe was material bodies moving in space and controlled by rudimentary mathematical laws, such as the law of gravity.

Assuming that nature was nothing but matter-in-motion, Newton believed that the science of mechanics (a fundamentally mathematical discipline) provided the model for all scientific reasoning. Consequently, the task of the natural scientists was to reduce all physical phenomena to their engendering mathematical laws. "Yet Newton was not interested in mathematically pure speculation for its own sake."[75] Unlike Galileo, Kepler, or Descartes, Newton did not believe in a priori certain truth. Therefore, all mathematical explanations of nature had to be verified and guided by experiment. For Newton ideas could claim scientific legitimacy only if they were deductions from sensible phenomena and thus capable of being verified within experience. As a result he refused to use rationalistic hypotheses in his scientific work, and this refusal, in turn, placed a strict limit upon the range of phenomena which could be investigated legitimately. For example, although Newton could specify the mathematical characteristics of gravitational forces, he refused to speculate about gravity's ultimate nature or the reason for its existence.

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[75] J.L. Wiser, *Political Philosophy: A History of the Search for Order* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983), p.232.

Hans Jonas' summary of three important developments, promoted by the new conceptualization that the first trailers such as Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo and Newton blazed, is worth being noted here.[76] The first is the geometrizing of nature and consequently the mathematization of physical cosmology. Pioneers of modern scientific tradition were equally convinced that geometry is the true language of nature and must therefore be the method of its investigation, which is to decode its sensuous message. This growing conviction was raised by Descartes to the dignity of a metaphysical principle when he split reality into the two, mutually exclusive, realms of the *res cogitans* and the *res extensa*--the world of mind and the world of matter (or, body). The latter is in its essence nothing but extension; therefore, nothing but determinations of extension, i.e., geometry, are required for a scientific knowledge of the external world. The contribution of Cartesian philosophy to the development of the scientific tradition will be further reviewed in the next section.

The second impact of the revolutionary conceptual scheme is the necessity of a new mathematics raised by the program of an analysis of motions. Galileo's and Descartes' analytical geometry was only the first step of new mathematics. The reduction of a complex motion to simple motions involves breaking it down to infinitesimal portions. The answer to the mathematical task thereby posed was the

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[76] H. Jonas, "The Scientific and Technological...," pp.88-9.

infinitesimal calculus, invented simultaneously by Leibniz and Newton.

Thirdly, the conceptual analysis of motions permitted an actual dissociation of its component parts in suitably set up experiments: it thus inspired an entirely new method of discovery and verification, the experimental method. "It must be realized that the controlled experiment, in which an artificially simplified nature is set to work so as to display the action of single factors, is *toto coelo* different from the observation, however, attentive, of 'natural' nature in its unprocessed complexity, and also from any non-analytical trying-out of its responses to our probing interventions. It essentially differs, in one word, from experience as such. What the experiment aims at--the isolation of factors and their quantification--and is designed to secure by the selective arrangement of conditions, presupposes the theoretical analytic..."[77]

In sum, new developments in the natural sciences, typified especially by the works of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton, gave powerful impetus to the validity of Aristotelian epistemological claims. Because the scientific revolutions in the seventeenth-century suggested the need for a radically refashioned theory of knowledge, modern philosophers began to be primarily concerned with establishing epistemology as the foundation of the sciences,

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[77] Ibid.

including moral or political sciences. What characterizes the higher intellectual life of the period following the Middle Ages, and more specifically, after the scientific revolution in the seventeenth-century, is "an abiding faith in the power of human reason, an intense interest in natural things, a lively yearning for civilization and progress."[78] Reason becomes the authority in science and modern philosophy. The notion begins to prevail that truth is not something to be handed down by authority or decreed by papal bulls, but something to be acquired, something to be achieved by free and impartial inquiry. The gaze is thus turned from the contemplation of supernatural things to the examination of natural things, from celestial things to terrestrial things, from heaven to earth--therefore, theology yields her crown to science and modern philosophy. The physical and the mental world, society, human institutions, and religion itself are explained by natural causes. Knowledge is esteemed and desired not only for its own sake, but also for its utility, for its practical value: "knowledge is power."

[78] Frank Thilly, *A History of Philosophy*, 3rd ed., revised by Ledger Wood (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1957), p.281.

The Emergence of Liberal Rationalism: The Cartesian and Lockean Epistemology

Nearly all the great leaders of modern thought, from Francis Bacon onward, are interested in the practical applications of the results of scientific investigation, and look forward with an enthusiastic optimism to a coming era of achievement in the mechanical arts, technology, medicine, as well as in the field of political and social reform. Modern philosophy, in its beginnings, breathes the spirit of the modern times which is described as "a spirit of revolt against medieval society, its institutions and conceptions, and as the self-assertion of human reason in the field of thought and action."[79] It is independent in its search for truth, resembling ancient Greek thought in this respect. It is rationalistic in the sense that it makes human reason the highest authority in the pursuit of knowledge. It is naturalistic in that it seeks to explain inner and outer nature without supernatural presuppositions. It is, therefore, scientific, keeping in touch with the new sciences, new cosmologies, particularly with the sciences of external nature.

However, the various seventeenth-century intellectual luminaries who set about developing the cosmological implications of the infinitizing of motion[80] were not in agreement on all counts. For example, some thinkers accepted reason (*ratio*) as the source and norm of knowledge,

[79] F. Thilly, *A History of Philosophy*, p.400.

[80] See, fn. 71 on p.54.

whereas others found this in sensory experience. Descartes and rationalists took the former view and Locke and empiricists, the latter. Some, preeminently Descartes, saw a radical dualism between thinking and extended substance, mind and body. Others, like Hobbes, followed a consistently monistic path, seeking to integrate the workings of mind into the material motions which they saw as exhausting the furniture of the cosmos.

With Descartes standing in stark opposition to Locke, we discover the first truly clear-cut polarization of the rational and empirical modes of knowing. In the seventeenth century, we can find the philosophical rumblings which gave birth to modern philosophy in the debate between "Continental rationalism" and "British empiricism." We may, therefore, characterize modern philosophers as rationalists and empiricists, according to the answers they give to the question of the origin, source and norm of knowledge. Descartes, Spinoza, Malebranche, and Leibniz are classified as rationalists; Bacon, Hobbes, Locke, Berkeley, and Hume, as empiricists. Closely connected with the question of the origin and source is the question of the certainty or validity of knowledge.

Rationalists declare that only rational or a priori truths, clearly and distinctly perceived truths, are certain; genuine knowledge cannot come from sense perception or experience, but must have its foundation in thought or reason: certain truths are natural or native to reason;

innate or inborn or a priori truths. Truths which have their origin in the mind itself are valid truths. On the other hand, empiricists generally deny that there are such a priori truths, and hold that clearly and distinctly perceived truths are not necessarily certain; there are no inborn truths: all knowledge springs from sense perception or experience, and hence so-called necessary presuppositions are not necessary or absolutely certain at all, but yield only probable knowledge. In a word, for Locke, apodictic knowledge of the empirical world is replaced by probabilistic knowledge of the empirical world.

Stated briefly, for rationalism, reason can go beyond sense experience and acquire a priori knowledge, whereas for empiricism reason can claim as positive knowledge only that which is based, directly or indirectly, on sense experience. As we have witnessed, the differences between Cartesian rationalism and Lockean empiricism are significant in some contexts and should not be lost sight of. However, the differences are essentially secondary disagreements within a more important consensus about the nature of the external world. On this question, it quickly becomes taken as a virtual presupposition that external, objective reality is composed of mathematically comprehensible entities. "This conviction served as the basis for the optimistic faith in the limitless possibilities of the mathematical mind to comprehend the world, a faith reflected undimmed in the much

later writings of the Enlightenment philosophers such as Laplace and Condorcet."[81]

The crucial point for present purposes is to note the assimilability of key Lockean and Cartesian ideas about the nature and extent of human cognition. Despite their differences, the overlap between Lockean empiricism and Cartesian rationalism in some of their central beliefs is profound, extensive, and vitally significant. Indeed it becomes difficult to determine which of them contributed the most to the Enlightenment conception of reason. Locke's critique of the Cartesian belief in innate ideas can be seen as "essentially an internecine battle within a school, not warfare between fundamentally opposed camps," as Spragens indicates. He continues:

> The undeniable differences between the empiricist and the rationalist orientations, therefore, should not divert us from the even larger areas of agreement between them in their basic view of the nature and capacities of human understanding. Accounts of the history of modern philosophy tend to focus on the persistent antinomies of the tradition: materialism/idealism, dualism/monism, empiricism/rationalism. But undergirding these debates, indeed generating them, is a common core of ideas that constitutes the fundamental paradigm or disciplinary matrix of the critical tradition in philosophy, and it is this fundamental paradigm that we have in mind when we refer to "liberal reason."[82]

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[81] T. Spragens, *The Dilemma of...*, p.26.

[82] T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, p.22. "Liberal reason" is Spragens' rather loose "family" term for an array of labels, including Enlightenment reason, scientific reason, positive reason, and critical reason. See ibid., p.14.

In a broad sense, both rationalist and empiricist points of view are "rationalistic,"[83] since they are both committed to the use of reason. If by "rationalism" in a broader sense we mean the attitude which makes reason instead of revelation or authority the standard of knowledge, all modern systems of philosophy are "rationalistic"; indeed, it is this characteristic which enables us to classify them as modern. Even though the structures of "scientific method" of the rationalist and the empiricist differ from each other, they are consistent in an aspect that the modern scientific method appears to accurately describe the principles of reason itself.

On the other hand, we may mean by "rationalism" the view that genuine knowledge consists of universal and necessary judgments, that the goal of thought is a "system" of truths in which the different propositions are logically related to one another. This is the mathematical conception of knowledge, which is accepted by nearly all modern thinkers as the ideal; whether they believe in the possibility of realizing it or not, they consider genuine only such knowledge as conforms to the mathematical model. This widespread acceptance of the mathematical conception of knowledge as the appropriate formal norm for all areas of knowledge had several significant corollaries:

> First, it generated a quest for a universal language, or at least for language that would approach the

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[83] See, F. Thilly, *A History of Philosophy*, pp.282-283.

> transparency and precision of numbers. Second, the idea of an allegedly universally applicable model of inquiry led to the idea of a unified science. Third, the acceptance of the mathematical norm began to bring into disrepute any discipline that seemed clearly incapable of approximating the geometric ideal.[84]

It followed from the mathematical conception of knowledge that the stuff from which the universe is composed is quite homogeneous, both in its composition and its operations. There was no longer a vast but definite number of heterogeneous entities in the world but really only a single uniform substance (or, as in the case of Descartes, two substances, one of which has no detectable location, or, as in the case of Spinoza, two virtually coterminous substances which are really the same thing viewed under different aspects). Everything is composed of simple natures which can be clearly and distinctly conceived, and anything more complex than these simple natures possesses only a secondary kind of reality. This uniform, empty spatial homogeneity characterized the Cartesian notion of *res extensa*, the Hobbesian notion of body, and the Lockean concept of primary qualities. By taking basic ideas of Cartesian rationalism and Lockean empiricism together, Spragens lists the principal tenets that compose the fundamental paradigm of "liberal reason," or "liberal rationalism":

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[84] T. Spragens, *The Dilemma of...*, p.31.

1. The assumptions and methods of the previously dominant Aristotelian-Scholastic tradition are mistaken and must be fundamentally revised or supplanted before genuine "natural philosophy" can be possible.
2. The human understanding, guided by the "natural right" of reason, can be and should be autonomous. Moreover, it constitutes the norm and the means by reference to which all else is to be measured.
3. It is possible and necessary to begin the search for knowledge with a clean slate.
4. It is possible and necessary to base knowledge claim on a clear and distinct, indubitable, self-evident foundation.
5. This foundation is to be composed of simple, unambiguous ideas or perception.
6. The appropriate formal standards for all human knowledge are those of the mathematical modes of inquiry.
7. The key to the progress of human knowledge is the development and pursuit of explicit rules of method.
8. The entire body of valid human knowledge is a unity, both in method and in substance.
9. Therefore, human knowledge may be made almost wholly accessible to all men, provided only that they not be abnormally defective in their basic faculties.
10. Genuine knowledge is in some sense certain, "verifiable," and capable of being made wholly explicit.
11. Knowledge is power, and the increase of knowledge therefore holds the key to human progress.[85]

The Enlightenment Movement

The core of the modern spirit is, as I have already mentioned, a spirit of change from or revolt against medieval society, its institutions and conceptions. The philosophical systems of Continental rationalism and English empiricism, with their various offshoots, added fuel to the flame of the change, change of world-views. Indeed, the spirit of independent inquiry and rationalistic scientific

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[85] T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, pp.22-23.

method, which was produced by the change, slowly but surely transformed the view of life. But the new ideas had to be popularized and disseminated over larger areas, and this task was performed during the eighteenth century, which has been called the century of the Enlightenment.

The Enlightenment carried over and popularized the ideas of Bacon and Descartes, of Bayle and Spinoza, and, above all, of Locke and Newton. It carried over the philosophy of laws of nature and natural right. Never was there an age so skeptical toward tradition, so confident in the powers of human reason and of science, so firmly convinced of the regularity and harmony of nature, and so deeply imbued with the sense of civilization's advance and progress. In other words, the Enlightenment movement represents the culmination of the entire modern intellectual movement which sought the demise of scholasticism, metaphysics, ontology, and a priori reasoning in general. Only after such attacks, it was believed, could the radically new style of reason come to reign as a guide to all action: only by procedures of observing facts and following the dictates of the senses could one find hope to enter the highest stage of intellectual progress.

It is an age in possession of principles and world-views--or, in other word, ideologies. It is "an age of philosophical dogmas, an age that has the courage to write books like [Christian] Wolff's *Reasonable Thoughts on God, the World, and the Soul of Man, also on All Things in*

General."[86] Eager to make their point, the Enlightenment *philosophes* or *ideologues* promoted their ideas in a zealous effort as if promoting religious faith.[87] They felt that the spread of their philosophy would usher in a completely new age. Full of confidence in the power of the human mind to solve its problem, it seeks to understand and to render intelligible human life--the state, religion, morality, language--and the universe at large.

Philosophy in the eighteenth century not only mirrored the strivings of the times, but influenced people's action. It came out of the closet of the scholars, and mingled with the crowd in the market-place; it no longer spoke a special language of its own--the language of scholars--but expressed itself in the speech of the people and in terms intelligible to men of average intelligence. Thus, men and women who considered themselves *philosophes*, or close to the *philosophes* in spirit, were found all over Europe. Owing to social, political, and ecclesiastical oppression, in France, the true home of it, the Enlightenment found its most radical utterance, and here its influence was greatest: the French Revolution was the result of the propagation of the new enlightened ideas.

The Enlightenment glorified knowledge, the sciences and the arts, civilization and progress, and boasted of the achievements of the human race. The progenitors of the

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[86] F. Thilly, *A History of Philosophy*, p.400.

[87] See Jay W. Stein, "The Beginnings of Ideology," *South Atlantic Quarterly*, 56 (April 1956), p.166.

Enlightenment set out to effect the disenchantment of the world, to replace myth, or superstition by solidly founded knowledge, and by the application of that knowledge in moral and political sciences as well as in technology. In so doing they prepared the way for the domination of modern culture by technical rationality. In the name of freedom from the domination of myth and superstition, the Enlightenment created a new form of domination: domination by instrumental rationality.

That is, for the Enlightenment, "truth was conceived as something straightforward and 'factual,' something to be rescued from the grasp of metaphysical and religious superstition by the noble, inexorable, and clarifying power of philosophy and rational thought."[88] This spirit of the Enlightenment fueled the later development of positivism, which today still dominates the pursuit of political inquiry. As an example of the application of instrumental rationality in political science, James Wiser summarizes their thought as follows:

> If humanity could learn to follow the laws of critical inquiry rather than the dictates of prejudice, custom, or authority, there appeared to be every reason to believe that the moral and political sciences would soon imitate the progressive development of the natural sciences...Thus assuming that the natural order was the basis for the political order, it seemed apparent that a rationally justified pattern of uniform political order could be discovered and implemented.[89]

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[88] S. Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical...*, p.177.

[89] J. Wiser, *Political Philosophy*, p.229.

It may not be neglected that what the modern enlightened spirit had been demanding in especially politics was in part achieved: liberty of conscience and worship, equal opportunity and economic freedom, representative government and equality of all individuals before the law. The respect for human reason and human rights which characterized nearly all the important modern philosophical doctrines, became universal in the eighteenth century, and the words humanity, good-will, natural rights, liberty, and equality were on every tongue. Therefore, we need here to refer to the fact that the liberal faith in reason was the driving force of the Enlightenment rebellion against traditionalism. As Spragens illustrates, liberalism, or liberal rationalism, can be equated with the Enlightenment.[90] Liberal political philosophy have placed particular importance on "the rational and cognitive dimension of politics and have thus taken as the ideal model of political activity the interaction of rational, if self-interested, men."[91] And the liberal commitment to rationalism, which was formulated by Locke and Descartes,

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[90] Of course, the origin and essence of liberalism has been and can be interpreted in a variety of ways. It is generally accepted that "liberalism has been, in the last four centuries, the outstanding doctrine of Western Civilization." See Harold J. Laski, *The Rise of European Liberalism* (New York: Unwin Books, 1962, originally published in 1936), p.11. Moreover, the rise of liberal theory is coeval with the agenda of problems of modern epistemology. However, as Spragens demonstrates in *The Irony of Liberal Reason*, liberal political theory is specifically connected to the Enlightenment. And the period after the Enlightenment, i.e, the nineteenth century, can be called the liberal century, for the century marked the high tide of liberalism as a political creed in the West.

[91] T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, p.13.

was expressed in the Enlightenment thought as a desire to get rid of the philosophy of superstition and mysticism.

But it should also be noted that a major paradox, or "irony" emerges concerning liberal political theory. Liberalism has flourished "in a philosophical context in which most supra-individual supports for knowledge and belief have been knocked out, and where most cultural products from the spheres of philosophy, science and art to politics and religion are ultimately validated out of the empirically certifiable resources and needs of individuals."[92] Thus, when the basic concepts in the liberal political vocabulary--e.g., liberty, human rights, representation and consent--have historically been persuasive in Europe and America, it has been persuasive precisely because "the negative arguments concerning the denial of supra-individual supports for knowledge and belief were regarded as true."[93] Indeed, liberal political ideas appear convincing if and only if the claims of relativism, reductionism and skepticism upon which liberalism is predicated[94] are regarded as true. Yet inherent in the notions of reductionism and skepticism is "the incoherence attached to formulating their tenets as independent

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[92] Aryeh Botwinick, *Wittgenstein, Skepticism, and Political Participation: An Essay in the Epistemology of Democratic Theory* (New York: University Press of America, 1985), p.1.

[93] Ibid.

[94] On the predication of liberalism on skeptistic and reductionistic tradition, see T. Spragens, *The Irony of...*, pp.3-127.

philosophical theses."[95] Therefore, as Hilary Putnam states it, extreme skepticism, reductionism and relativism cannot possibly be true because they are in a certain way self-refuting: "A self-refuting supposition is one whose truth implies its own falsity."[96] In a word, the "self-destructive" liberal faith in reason undermined liberalism itself and depraved the contemporary politics to be illiberal and inhumane.

The French Positivism and the Vienna Circle

The origin of modern positivism, which has come to be associated with the very idea of a social or political "science", is conditioned by the development of the reductionist intellectual movement. The reductionist intellectual movement has gained increasing strength with the rise of the authority of science, and, more especially, with the enormous progress within the spheres of chemistry and physiology. As we have examined, all spheres of nature were being gradually brought under the scientific principles and methods which Kepler, Galileo and Newton had established. It is not surprising therefore that, as we have witnessed in thoughts of Descartes, Locke, and the Enlightenment, the work which the founders of modern natural science had performed within the spheres of astronomy and physics began to influence the conception of life and of the

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[95] A. Botwinick, *Wittgenstein, Skepticism...*, p.1.

[96] H. Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History*, p.158; Cited in A. Botwinick, *Wittgenstein, Skepticism...*, pp.1-2.

world. Since they had gained a knowledge or comprehension of nature by explaining its phenomena according to the laws discovered in experience, modern scientists and philosophers attempted to base faith, manner of life and conduct on an entirely new foundation. That is, the time has come for men to choose such ideas only as "positive" science can acknowledge and confirm when constructing their conceptions of life and of the world. The task which they had to take upon themselves was to make mental science a positive science, and to give a systematic presentation of the main facts, laws and methods of all the positive sciences.

Various groups of scholars of the nineteenth and twentieth century carried on and supported this reductionist tradition. They are the French positivists of the nineteenth century, the logical positivists of the Vienna Circle, the English schools of Analytical Philosophy, and the various schools of behaviorism in psychology. These groups support or reinforce each other even when they have not actually come together. In order to comment on the type of positivist thinking in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as a whole, I shall begin by discussing the French positivism of the nineteenth century led by the work of Comte and the logical positivism of the Vienna Circle of the twentieth century.

In France the Enlightenment, which rested on a naturalistic philosophy, led to the great Revolution with its disturbing social and political changes. After the

Revolution, the sensationalistic and materialistic theories of Condillac, the Encyclopedists, and d'Holbach, which had been so popular during the last half of the eighteenth century, lost their vogue, and new philosophies came to the front. It was not surprising that an excess of criticism and liberalism should have aroused a conservative reaction, and that the demand for free thought should have been opposed by a school of thinkers who emphasized the principle of authority and offered a supernaturalistic philosophy as a remedy to the troubled age. But not one of the movements opposed to sensationalism and materialism possessed sufficient vigor to satisfy the needs of an age that still felt an interest in the ideas of liberty, equality, and progress.

The reform of human society remained the dream of many French thinkers, and practical questions appealed to them strongly. The political revolution had not brought universal happiness; the ignorance and misery of the lower classes had not been removed by the proclamation of universal human rights. But it was now held that the goal could be reached by social evolution, through the gradual reform of society by education and enlightenment. The French tradition of positivism is mainly composed of the works of Saint-Simon, Comte and Durkheim. Even though Saint-Simon, Comte and Durkheim do not subscribe to every one of the same tenets with equal vigor, there are sufficient continuities in the work of them to justify talk

of a French tradition of positivism. Bryant articulates twelve tenets which "are stated in a form which is closest to Comte's position, with references back to Saint-Simon and forward to Durkheim where appropriate."[97] The twelve tenets together make up the French positivism and constitute a coherent theory which all three theorists basically accepted:

1. There is but one world, and it has an objective existence.
2. The constituents of the world, and the laws which govern their movements, are discoverable through science alone, science being the only form of knowledge. Therefore that which cannot be known scientifically, cannot be known.
3. Science depends upon reason and observation duly combined.
4. Science cannot discover all the constituents of the world, and all the laws which govern them, because human powers of reason and observation are limited. Scientific knowledge will remain for ever relative to the level of intellectual development attained and to progress in the social organization of science.
5. What man seeks to discover about the world is normally suggested by his practical interests and his situation.
6. There are laws of historical development whose discovery will enable the past to be explained, the present understood and the future predicted.
7. There are social laws which govern the interconnections between different institutional and cultural forms.
8. Society is a reality *sui generis*.
9. Social order is the natural condition of society.
10. Moral and political choice should be established exclusively on a scientific basis.
11. The subjection of man before the natural laws of history and society precludes evaluation of institutional and cultural forms in any terms other than those of conformity with these laws.
12. The positive, the constructive, supersedes the negative, the critical. The positive, the

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[97] Christopher G. A. Bryant, *Positivism in Social Theory and Research* (New York: St. Martin, 1985), p.12.

> relative, also supersedes the theological and the metaphysical, the absolute.[98]

According to this school of thought--French positivism--knowledge is valuable only because it helps people modify the conditions amidst which they live in the material world and in society. For this purpose men need to know only phenomena and the laws under which things operate. In place of supernatural religion or any metaphysical unity, Comte sets humanity and social progress. The negative attitude of positivism toward any reality beyond the experienced order has influenced various modern schools of thought, including pragmatism,[99] scientific naturalism, instrumentalism, and behaviorism.

One of the most influential movements in recent positive philosophy is logical positivism, which originated in the "Vienna Circle" in the early twenties. Due largely to the influence of Moritz Schlick (1882-1936), the central figure of the school at its inception, the Vienna Circle positivists made its influence felt not only in Austria and Germany but also eventually throughout the West. The original members of this group, especially active during the twenties and thirties, were for the most part specialists in fields other than philosophy: physicists, mathematicians, or men who had done their main professional work in the fields

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[98] C.G.A. Bryant, *Positivism in Social Theory...*, pp.12-13.

[99] Comte is discussed as a forerunner of pragmatism because of his rejection of reality as substance. He was not satisfied with the attempts to explain all things in terms of substance.

of symbolic logic and scientific methodology. Whereas the earlier positivism was founded on nineteenth-century science, the new developments are based on more recent logical and scientific concepts.[100]

Logical positivism has, in the course of its brief development, undergone many radical transformations. There is a great diversity among the different representations of the movement, as the movement has been variously designated logical positivism, the Vienna Circle, logical empiricism, scientific empiricism, and the Unity of Science Movement. Yet the main outlines of the positivistic position stand out clearly. Joergen Joergensen, an historian of the logical positivist movement, identifies the logical positivists as follows:

> The forerunners of logical empiricism are, in the opinion of the members of the movement themselves, all those philosophers and scientists who show a clear antimetaphysical or antispeculative, realistic or materialistic, critical or skeptical, tendency---as well as everyone who has contributed essentially to the development of their most important methodological instrument: symbolic logic.[101]

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[100] The logical positivists acknowledged that many earlier thinkers influenced their work. Those mentioned included most of the European thinkers in the empiricist tradition, anyone who made a contribution to symbolic logic or axiomatics, and finally, any thinker who showed anti-metaphysical or anti-speculative tendencies in his work. See Hans Hahn, Otto Neurath, and Rudolf Carnap, "Wissenschaftlische Weltauffassung: Der Wiener Kreis" (1929), in Otto Neurath, *Empiricism and Sociology*, trans. by Paul Foulkes and Marie Neurath, edited by Marie Neurath and Robert S. Cohen (Dordrecht, Holland: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1973), p.304. However, three contemporary thinkers stand out as having had a truly significant influence on the development of logical positivism: Ernst Mach, Bertrand Russell, and Ludwig Wittgenstein. On these three thinkers' influence, see Bruce J. Caldwell, *Beyond Positivism: Economic Methodology in the Twentieth Century* (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1982), pp.11-12.

[101] Joergen Joergensen, *The Development of Logical Empiricism, International Encyclopedia of Unified Science*, Vol. II, No.9 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p.6.

The members of the Vienna Circle were especially interested in working out a secure intellectual foundation for all science. They felt that the sciences, though not now unified, belong to one coherent system. The problem was to find an inclusive system of terms and concepts which are common to all the sciences and not limited to one or to only a few of them. This aim led to a study of the language of science and an analysis of language in the hope of finding a universal language of science which, for them, is the task of philosophy. In other words, the true task of philosophy, that they thought they had discovered, was to analyze knowledge statements with the aim of making such propositions clear and unambiguous. As Schlick stated, "...philosophy is that activity through which the meaning of statements is revealed or determined."[102]

Compared with conventional arguments of philosophy, the logical positivist approach represents a definite shift in method and tactics. Instead of attacking the arguments of the conventional philosophers, they have turned to a criticism of language in an attempt to bypass the older issues as meaningless, since for them the task of philosophy is the analysis of language, especially the language of science. Thus in their writings the differentiation of what is scientific and what is not became convergent with what is

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[102] Moritz Schlick, "The Turning Point in Philosophy," trans. by David Rynin in A.J. Ayer, ed., *Logical Positivism* (New York: Macmillan, 1959), p.56.

meaningful and what is meaningless. In short, logical positivism asserted that only meaningful statements were to be permitted scientific consideration and accorded the status of knowledge claims.

The employment of verifiability as the criterion of meaning is the core of logical positivism: Verification thus requires the reducibility of statements to direct records of experience. By this criterion, metaphysical statements are neither analytic nor subject to empirical test, so must be deemed meaningless, expressing emotional stances or "general attitude towards life."[103] That there is knowledge only from experience was at the heart of the logical positivists' relentless attack upon metaphysics and speculative philosophy. Attacks on metaphysics were, of course, hardly new but "the logical positivists went much further than Comte in that they demanded something he opposed, the identification of positivism with empiricism."[104] But, as I have mentioned above, the positivist attack on metaphysics does not mean that the propositions and arguments of the latter are merely false, as Schlick emphasizes:

> The denial of the existence of a transcendent external world would be just as much a metaphysical statement as its affirmation. Hence the consistent empiricist

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[103] R. Carnap, "The Elimination of Metaphysics Through Logical Analysis of Language," trans. by Arthur Pap, in A.J. Ayer, ed., *Logical Positivism*, p.78.

[104] C.G.A. Bryant, *Positivism in Social Theory...*, p.112. Logical positivism differs from earlier forms of positivism--for example, the French positivism---in its use of "logical analysis" for the clarification of problems and assertions. This difference is the major reason why Rudolf Carnap preferred the label "logical empiricism" to " logical positivism." According to his notion, the aim of philosophy is logical analysis; and its subject matter is the empirical or positive sciences.

> does not deny the transcendent world, but shows that both its denial and affirmation are meaningless. This last distinction is of the greatest importance. I am convinced that the chief opposition to our view derives from the fact that the distinction between the falsity and the meaninglessness of a proposition is not observed. The proposition 'Discourse concerning a metaphysical external world is meaningless' does not say: 'There is no external world,' but something altogether different. The empiricist does not say to the metaphysician 'what you say is false,' but 'what you say asserts nothing at all!' He does not contradict him, but says 'I don't understand you.'[105]

Rather, the major point of the positivist attack is that propositions of metaphysics cannot be accorded the status of knowledge claims. As A. J. Ayer, a leading contemporary positivist, succinctly puts it: "Metaphysical utterances were condemned not for being emotive, which could hardly be considered as objectionable in itself, but for pretending to be cognitive, for masquerading as something that they were not."[106] He continues: "[t]he originality of the logical positivists lay in their making the impossibility of metaphysics depend not upon the nature of what could be known but upon the nature of what could be said."[107]

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[105] Moritz Schlick, "Positivism and Realism," trans. by David Rynin, in A.J. Ayer, ed., *Logical Positivism*, p.78.

[106] A.J. Ayer, ed., *Logical Positivism*, pp.10-11.

[107] Ibid., p.11.

4. THE NATURE OF SCIENTISM

Defining Scientism

The predominant trends in contemporary political science, which attacked the philosophical tradition of political theory and intended to establish the autonomy of the discipline as an empirical science, modeled after the methodology of the natural sciences, are generally called behaviorism or behavioralism. The dedication to scientific research also ordinarily justifies calling these trends in such other ways as positivism, empiricism, scientism, objectivism, and relativism. Either singly or in combination, and either interchangeably or distinctively, these terms are those constantly present in the attempt to characterize the distinctiveness of the positivistic trends in political inquiry.

Yet the meanings of these very words which are offered for the sake of clarification are themselves highly evanescent at best. Each of the terms stands for a rather vague and diffuse consensus which contains broad areas of disagreement and uncertainty.[108] There is, indeed, by no means an accord on either the definitions of the terms, or the extent to which the various designations should be incorporated into a single organic whole. The relationships between the terms are, for some commentators, one of overlap, not of identity. Each has its own distinctive

[108] On disagreement and uncertainty of each of the terms, see T. Spragens, Jr., *The Dilemma of...*, pp.18-22.

ideas and concerns which distinguish it from the others. In spite of the thematic variations of these terms, however, at least some of the fundamental assumptions of the scientistic tradition are operative in each case. There exist family relationships between these diverse characterizations. And, there is a single concern that unifies them in their activities against the classical tradition of political theory--a concern for producing scientific knowledge about politics which is objectively descriptive, precise and generalized. The positivist paradigm which lies behind the various tenets of scientism is, thus, characterized by an theoretical/conceptual homogeneity.

Although much confusion has resulted from the fact that the definition of what is understood by "science" and "scientism" has varied significantly at different times and places, the behavioral, positive, or empirical approach can, therefore, be in general equated with "the" scientific method. In other words, it can be said that political behavioralism, positivism, and empiricism are forms of scientism which, as an epistemology, emulates the model of the natural sciences. And, I think the term "scientism" is the most general and pervasive designation of all the terms, and also capable of both depicting the dominant form of contemporary inquiry and incorporating the notions of behavioralism, positivism, and empiricism within its penumbra.[109] Scientism has thus come to be associated with

the very idea of a political "science" and the quest to make the discipline "scientific." Furthermore, according to Voegelin, "[s]cientism...is a decisive ingredient in modern intellectual movements like positivism and neopositivism, and, in particular, in modern political mass movements like communism and national socialism."[110] On the basis of this belief, I want here to reconstruct the definition about and the nature of what we mean by scientism in a total sense, as an all-inclusive, all-pervasive term.[111] As an example of the broad definition of scientism, Voegelin defines the term "scientism" as having three principal dogmas:

> (1) the assumption that the mathematized science of natural phenomena is a model science to which all other sciences ought to conform; (2) that all realms of being are accessible to the methods of the sciences of phenomena; and (3) that all reality which is not accessible to sciences of phenomena is either irrelevant or, in the more radical form of dogma, illusionary.[112]

Indeed scientism has come to be associated with methodological endeavor which make sensory experience the foundation of all knowledge, and also with their complementary phenomena which propose a division between

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[109] "Penumbra" is a term used by some linguistic analysts to designate the connotations and family terms that cluster around a particular word.

[110] See E. Voegelin, "The Origins of Scientism," pp.463-464.

[111] It should be noted here that using the term "scientism," of course, might misleadingly suggest contrasts which are not intended or present. In fact, the terms positivism, behavioralism, empiricism, scientism and others are in large part conceptual alter egos, struggling together over insoluble dilemmas which are the function of mutually shared beliefs.

[112] E. Voegelin, "The Origins of Scientism," p.462.

objects which are accessible to observation (about which knowledge is therefore possible) and objects which are not (and about which there can therefore be no knowledge). In short, scientism is frequently understood as a cognitional venture in that "in meeting the conceptual and methodological requirements of the physical sciences, it determines the order of human reality in terms of physical reality."[113]

Basic Tenets of Scientism

Because the term scientism has been so widely applied and appropriated, it might be helpful to specify the family of ideas long associated with scientism. Leszek Kolakowski presents the most systematically developed of general definitions, or formulations, of positivism. According to him, there are four fundamental elements which, taken together, can be said to constitute positivism.[114] General formulations such as this are of value in that they point up certain central issues for examining scientism in a broad sense. Furthermore, we must recognize that there are other elements associated with scientism which are not easily reducible to any one of these four and not obviously

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[113] H.Y. Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding*, p.62.

[114] In formulating the basic tenets of scientism, I am deeply indebted to Kolakowski, especially for the first four elements presented here. In his "overall view," Kolakowski presents positivism as "a collection of rules and evaluative criteria for refering to human knowledge," and as "a normative attitude, regulating how we use such terms as 'knowledge,' 'science,' 'cognition' and 'information'". See L. Kolakowski, *The Alienation of Reason*, ch.1.

inferred from them.[115] The fifth element is presented as an example of them. There are several corollaries of these basic tenets and various degrees and versions of each of them, but together they form the critical group of assumptions operative in the context of theory formation which are derived from scientism. They are, furthermore, ideas that are related both logically and historically, sharing a common basis in the same general world-view and sharing a common origin.[116] They all have grown from the root model of a unidimensional world.

The first element of family ideas of scientism, i.e., emphasis of science and scientific method, is the view that "the unity of science stems from a single fundamental law from which all other laws are ultimately derived...or from certain evolutionary processes common to nature and society..."[117] The word "scientism", in its original sense, is to be understood as meaning the belief that science, in the modern sense of that term, and scientific method, as described by modern scientists, afford the only reliable

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[115] This value is strictly limited in that they are also insensitive to much of what the debate about positivism and scientism has been about in different intellectual and cultural contexts. To correctly identify terminology, complementary analysis of the debate about the different characterizations are needed. However, it is not the present purpose to focus on the reflection of the debate in detail. For the other elements, see Percy S. Cohen, "Is Positivism Dead?" *Sociological Review*, 28:1 (1980), p.142.

[116] Perhaps it is misleading, strictly speaking, to talk of a common origin, since each of the features of scientism mentioned had its precursors. For example, seventeenth-century nominalism clearly had a forerunner in the theological nominalism of Duns Scotus and William of Ockham. As a group, possessed of a clear familial relationship and articulated as a gestalt, however, these ideas did arise together.

[117] C.G.A. Bryant, *Positivism in Social...*, p.6.

natural means of acquiring knowledge about whatever is real. Science is a clearly definable form of inquiry which can be extended to examine any area of experience. Scientific method claims to have universal application, and its great success in analyzing and interpreting physical phenomena has helped to maintain a persistent faith in the method itself. Some scientists have argued, therefore, that science is the only avenue to human knowledge, that is the "sole authentic mode of revelation," and to know is to measure, to count, or to state things in quantitative terms. They also have come to claim that there is nothing else worthy of consideration. Scientific method, according to them, has no limitations whatever.

As Juergen Habermas puts it, scientism "means science's belief in itself: that is, the conviction that we can no longer understand science as one form of possible knowledge, but rather must identify knowledge with science."[118] It is important to note that scientism involves not merely a distinction between science and non-science, but the relegation of the latter to an inferior status, even to cognitive meaninglessness or nonsense. So the question "Can science save us?" is even answered in the affirmative[119] by some addicts of "the superstition of science." In a word, scientism claims to be the absolute paradigm for all knowledge, including political knowledge. Eugene Meehan,

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[118] Juergen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, p.214.

[119] George A. Lundberg, *Can Science Save Us?* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1947)

one of the eminent figures of the behavioral persuasion, argues that scientism is "the only epistemic base for human knowledge."[120]

In another account of the tenets of scientism, Anthony Giddens, a sociologist, discusses the particular problems of "positivism in sociology," as distinct from the general problems of "positivism in philosophy," in connection with "the assertion that the concepts and methods employed in the natural sciences can be applied to form a 'science of man,' or a natural science of sociology."[121] His account of "positivism in sociology" is thus most directly related to this first element, although it also has connections with the other ones. According to him, "the 'positivist attitude' in sociology may be said to comprise three connected suppositions": (1) the methodological supposition that the procedures of natural science may be directly adapted to sociology; (2) the analytical supposition that the end-result of sociological investigations can be formulated as "laws" or "law-like" generalizations of the same kind as those established by natural scientists; (3) the practical assumption that sociology has a technical character.[122]

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[120] E. Meehan, *The Theory and Method...*, p. 12.

[121] "Positivism in philosophy" is the contention that "the notions and statements of science constitute a framework by reference to which the nature of any form of knowledge may be determined." Anthony Giddens, ed., *Positivism and Sociology* (London: Heinemann, 1974), p.3.

[122] Ibid., pp.3-4; and C.G.A. Bryant, *Positivism in Social...*, pp.7-9.

The second rule of scientism, i.e., phenomenalism, is opposed to that long and powerful philosophical tradition of distinguishing between the essences of things and their observable manifestations. It either banishes essences from all rational discussion or insists that all, so-called essences, must be reduced to phenomena. This rule, the one most often attributed to scientism, states that "[w]e are entitled to record only that which is actually manifested in [sense] experience."[123] That "man can acquire information about the environment only through the sensory apparatus"[124] is one of the prime assumptions of scientism. It admits phenomena to knowledge but not noumena, existence but not essence. Kolakowski stresses that while "positivists do not object to inquiry into the immediately invisible causes of any observed phenomenon, they object to any accounting for it in terms of occult entities that are by definition inaccessible to human knowledge."[125] Scientism, then, leaves no place for metaphysics by asserting the claims of sense experience as the ultimate foundation of human knowledge and denying the possibility of meaningful discourse concerning supersensible objects.

The third rule, i.e., nominalism, follows from the second rule and is often merged with it. It asserts that

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[123] L. Kolakowski, *The Alienation of Reason*, p.3.

[124] E. Meehan, *Value Judgment and Social Science: Structures and Processes* (Homewood, IL: Dorsey Press, 1969), p.12.

[125] E. Meehan, *Value Judgment...*, p.4.

general terms refer only to particular instances of things and not to some general properties, as such. "We may not assume that any insight formulated in general terms can have any real references other than individual facts." "According to nominalism," Kolakowski continues, "every abstract science is a method of abridging the recording of experience and gives us no extra, independent knowledge in the sense that, via its abstractions, it opens access to empirically inaccessible domains of reality." Thus the general entities of metaphysics are dismissed as fictions "for they illegitimately ascribed existence to things that have no existence save as names or words."[126]

The fourth rule, i.e., dichotomy of facts and norms, states that facts and values are distinct conceptual categories, and that they ought to be separated in the scientific investigations of political phenomena. It refuses to call value judgments and normative statements knowledge and insists that normative statements and their terms must, if they are to have meaning, be reducible to descriptions, explanations or technical prescriptions. According to the rule of phenomenalism, "we are obliged to reject the assumption of values as characteristics of the world for they are not discoverable in the same way as the only kind of knowledge worthy of the name." In addition, the rule of nominalism renders untenable "the assumption that beyond the visible world there exists a domain of

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[126] Ibid., pp.5-7.

values 'in themselves', with which our evaluations are correlated in some mysterious way."[127]

Scientism maintains the dualism of fact and value in the name of scientific judiciousness. The scientific method works well only when applied to things that have tangible existence, that is, to facts. Furthermore, the logic of science, scientism argues, entails no moral commitment: science does not and cannot create values. Instead of confusing the two realms, they must be kept apart and considered to be "logically heterogeneous."[128] This hallmark of value neutrality, which juxtaposes fact and value, is "the most acute manifestation of the behavioralist bifurcation of knowledge, science, methodology, and objectivity on the one hand and action, philosophy, ontology, and subjectivity on the other." This sharp separation between facts and norms "epitomizes this bifurcation whose leitmotifs are rigor and objectivity."[129]

The last element of scientism, i.e., objectivism, or the objective ideal of knowledge, claims the image of true knowledge as utterly objective, in the sense of fully specifiable, unambiguous, and wholly unstructured by the agent of the knowledge. The objective ideal of knowledge

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[127] Ibid., p.8.

[128] The view that fact and value are logically heterogeneous is stated most clearly in David Easton, *The Political System: An Inquiry into the State of Political Science* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), pp.219-32 and *A Framework of Political Analysis* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1965), pp.1-22.

[129] H.Y. Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding*, pp.102-103.

claims that reality is objective in the sense that it is separable or ought to be separated from the realm of subjectivity. No reality is subjective. This doctrine is well captured in the following passage from John Nelson's *What Should Political Theory Be Now?*:

> Objectivism is the doctrine of the positivist (or passivist) epistemologist. It contends that there is a single, exhaustive, and ineradicable separation between subject and object. Often, this is associated with an ontology of atomism, such that the world is claimed to consist of elemental particles (objects) individuated prior to and apart from any intervention by subjects. At any rate, the objectivist is convinced that the world (of objects) is simply there(somewhere), utterly independent of his activities in investigation of it. The issue of objectivity then becomes the problem of keeping subjectivity out of inquiry; in other words, of saving the appearances while also saving the sanctity of beings (objects).[130]

Scientism in this sense denies the qualitative differences between what is human--human because it is subjective--and what is merely natural--objective. So methodologically speaking, the scientist claims that political science is amenable to the same procedures as the natural sciences in the name of causal explanation and prediction. Even though twentieth-century political behavioralism maintains the difference between the behavioral and the natural, it treats political behavior as if it were a physical object and therefore amenable to the same techniques of the physical sciences. Insofar as

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[130] J.S. Nelson, "Political Theory as Political Rhetoric," in J.S. Nelson, ed., *What Should Political...*, p.197.

political behavioralism succumbs in this way to the "canons of scientific method" as defined in the model of the natural sciences, it is committed to scientism.

Scientism as an Epistemological Fall

The presuppositions of positivistic epistemology, as formulated by Descartes, Locke and their successors, and underlying the intellectual premises of Western liberalism, have fostered a mechanistic world view in which personal or primary qualities could be brought under control by Galilean and Newtonian mechanics from which impersonal or secondary qualities could be derived. Thus, with the development of the paradigm of rationalistic scientism from Descartes and Locke through the Enlightenment *philosophes* to the modern positivists, the radically refashioned epistemology became rigorously impersonal and unambiguously precise. Neither ambiguity nor personality intrude to obscure the clarity of pure *res extensa*, which is the proper object of knowledge. Knowledge, like the reality it was to know, was in the Cartesian view, seen as homogeneous, clear, and distinct. This model of epistemology is clearly appropriate to a modern mind which sees the world itself as both impersonal and precise.

The central premises of positivistic epistemology or world view, for example precision and impersonality, implied a whole series of dichotomies which were soon to become entrenched in the most basic presuppositions of modern

philosophy.[131] First was the standard split between subjective and objective. The problem was that the location of the knower and his relationship with the known were quite unaccountable. The subjective-objective model of knowledge remained unresolved in the objective conception of reality, and has plagued Western philosophy ever since. Second was a bifurcation of reason and emotion. Since reason took its structure from the reality, to know was its task; and, since the reality as seen by the new Copernican and Galilean cosmology had no legitimate objects of emotion, the realm of emotion was obviously distinct from the proper object of reason. Emotions were, by definition, irrational, as the language used to describe them from Spinoza to Freud clearly indicated. And finally, there evolved the alleged dichotomy of facts and values, with only the former having reference to the real world and hence a valid place in science. Facts refer to reality and can be verified in reference to it; values or moral aspects are emotions and desires. Therefore, facts can be true or false, while values are meaningless in terms of truth or falsity.

The parallelism of these three dichotomies is not merely formal, for they are substantively intertwined as well. The concepts of objective, reason, and fact all are expressive of the reality depicted by the seventeenth-century cosmology. Their opposites--subjective, emotional, and values--in each case "represent the receptacles for

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131 T. Spragens, *The Dilemma of...*, pp.30-31.

those leftover phenomena which could not fit into the world as it was defined but which could apparently not be abolished either."[132] The elements of the three dichotomies share a close family relationship.[133] The formal parallelism and substantive overlap of these dichotomies is of course no accident, since they are all the offspring of the same seventeenth-century outlook. Thus, to be objective is to be factual, and being rational means to be objective. And on the other side, taking a subjective approach means to let one's emotions and values become involved.

The objectivist world view with its numerous interrelated dichotomies provides the background of the contemporary bifurcation of political theory into the empirical and the normative, and the implications of the quest for a value-free political science. Even today the centrality of the fact-value dichotomy to the pursuit of the scientific study of man is discovered in many works of modern mind baptized with scientific epistemology. It is generally believed by the behavioralist and positivist-inspired political inquirers that, without a logical separation of facts from values, of objective reality from subjective preferences about reality, a true science of politics would be impossible.[134] Rather, from this natural,

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[132] Ibid., p.31.

[133] The relationship among the three terms has been emphasized by the frequent use of one of the terms on one side of the ontological split to define its brothers.

[134] It is worth citing here Easton's comment on the implications of the fact-value dichotomy, which operates as a silent working hypothesis in much of political inquiry: "values can ultimately be

physical, factual, or mathematical bias, we are told, would flow the foundation for infallible and universal moral and political sciences. In other words, in emulating the legacy of the Galilean mathematization of nature into the *mathesis universalis* and Descartes' "mechanicomorphic philosophy of nature,"[135] contemporary political positivists, as disciples of Hobbesian scientism, have endeavoured "to create a theory of the body politic equal to the Galilean theory of physical bodies--equal in clarity, in scientific method, and in certainty."[136]

This rationalistic understanding of science has had the effect of challenging the very legitimacy of political philosophy itself. Scientism entails denials of "the dignity of science to the quest for substance in nature, in man and society, as well as in transcendental reality; and in the more radical form, it denies the reality of substance."[137] As a consequence, the contemporary political philosophy lost much of its previous force and credibility. As James Wiser indicates, "as an attempt to reconstruct

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reduced to emotional responses conditioned by the individual's total life-experiences. In this interpretation, although in practice no one proposition need express either a pure fact or a pure value, facts and values are logically heterogeneous. The factual aspect of a proposition refers to a part of reality; hence it can be tested by reference to the facts. In this way we check its truth. The moral aspect of a proposition, however, expresses only the emotional response of an individual to a state of real or presumed facts." D. Easton, *The Political System*, p.221.

135 James Collins, *Descartes' Philosophy of Nature*, (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971).

136 E. Cassirer, *The Myth of the State*, p.165. For a discussion on the implications of Hobbes' scientism on the study of politics, see T. Spragens, *The Politics of Motion: The World of Thomas Hobbes*, (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky Press, 1973).

137 E. Voegelin, "The Origins of Scientism," pp.462-463.

human and social order, political philosophy, necessarily involves an act of creative imagination, and by its very nature the meaning of such an act is of the type that in part must be accepted rather than simply observed."[138] This decision to accept certain arguments or to accredit certain experiences is necessarily a matter of personal judgment. Indeed classical political philosophy is based upon an acknowledgement of this fact.[139] Yet in the "climate of opinion" emanating from the scientific rationalism the personal involvement of the knower within the act of cognition came to be seen as the root of subjectivity. The objective character of modern science was associated with its impersonal quality and such a quality, in turn, was to be secured through a rigorous application of the "scientific method." In a critique of the impact of positivistic epistemology upon contemporary culture and its modes of thought, thus Theodore Roszak manifests the prevalence of ill-fated scientism:

> Science...has become a total culture dominating the lives of millions for whom discussions of the theory of knowledge are so much foreign language. Yet objectivity, whatever its epistemological status, has become the commanding life style of our society... Objectivity as a state of being fills the very air we breathe in a scientific culture; it grips us subliminally in all we say, feel, and do. The

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138 J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," *Political Science Reviewer*, 7 (1977), p.91.

139 For example, Aristotle states that "Scientific knowledge is judgment about things that are universal and necessary, and the conclusions of demonstration, and all scientific knowledge follow from first principles (for scientific knowledge involves apprehension of a rational ground)." Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk.VI, Ch.6. 1140b. Also, see J. Wiser, "Political Theory, Personal Knowledge, and Public Truth," *Journal of Politics*, 36:3 (August 1974), pp.661-674.

> mentality of the ideal scientist becomes the very soul of the society.[140]

Roszak says that the stuff of this soul is objectivity and that the belief in objectivity becomes myth. That is, he characterizes the modern rationalistic ideal of scientific knowledge as "the myth of objective consciousness." Again to quote Roszak:

> There is but one way of gaining access to reality--so the myth holds--and this is to cultivate a state of consciousness cleansed of all subjective distortion, all personal involvement. What flows from this state of consciousness qualifies as knowledge, and nothing else does.[141]

Accordingly, there developed a growing reluctance to accept the scientific claims of those traditions of inquiry especially where such an application was inappropriate, e.g., theology, ethics and political philosophy. Furthermore, there have emerged intellectual endeavours which have launched attack on the scientistic tradition. In the next chapter I will investigate Voegelin's radically unique critique of scientistic tradition and relate it to some of these new developments.

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140 Theodore Roszak, *The Making of a Counter Culture: Reflections on the Technocratic Society and Its Youthful Opposition*, (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1969), p.216.

141 Ibid., p.208.

CHAPTER II

ERIC VOEGELIN'S CRITIQUE OF POSITIVISTIC RATIONALISM

In recent years, in fact, interest in the Voegelinian philosophical science of politics has enjoyed a revival of sorts. Voegelin's philosophical science of politics has come to the attention of the political theorists who attempt to revive and return to the great tradition of political theory. The critique Voegelin brings to bear on the positivist self-understanding of political inquiry is, I believe, largely representative of the restored tradition of political philosophy in general.[1] The restoration of political science in Voegelin's sense is essentially the restoration of the classical concept of science and a return to the pre-positivist conception of political inquiry. As such, it primarily marks a return to the classical Platonic-Aristotelian conception of political science. And, this restoration involves a response to a major development in the recent history of political inquiry. That is, it is a

[1] As a leading exponent of the revived tradition of political theory, many commentators prefer referring to Leo Strauss to Eric Voegelin. However, as James M. Rhodes states in his recent essay comparing Strauss and Voegelin, and clarifying how their work points beyond positivism toward a knowable political ethics, "Voegelin's theories are truer to the historical origins of philosophy and revelation than Strauss's." See J. M. Rhodes, "Philosophy, Revelation, and Political Theory: Leo Strauss and Eric Voegelin," *Journal of Politics*, 49:4 (Nov. 1987), pp.1036-1060. Also see Chapter Four of this dissertation, pp.390-400.

response to the intrusion of positivist theoretical dogma into the tradition of political theory involving debates over the meaning of "science," "theory," and "philosophy" in political science and the notion of value freedom in research. Thus, the restoration has also produced reflections on the roots and claims of positivist political science in the face of what for over two thousand years has been called "political theory."

The purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to examine Voegelin's endeavor concerning the proper self-understanding of political inquiry by exploring Voegelin's notion of some key terms such as "science," "theory" and "philosophy," and his radically unique anti-positivist, anti-gnostic critique. His protest movement against the chaos spawned by the positivistic tradition that has dominated political science since the latter part of the nineteenth century is one of Voegelin's major contributions to political philosophy. In this chapter, I will review Voegelin's critical enterprises: first of all, on the restoration of the onto-epistemic meaning of science, theory, and philosophy, secondly, on the positivistic perversion of science brought about by the overruling of methodological consideration over theoretical relevance, thirdly, on Max Weber's contribution for consolidation of objectivistic value-free social sciences in the positivistic tradition. And, finally, special attention is devoted to the relations of Voegelin to those individuals

who have contributed most creatively to the reconstruction of anti-positivistic humanity.

1. ONTO-EPISTEMIC DEFINITION OF SCIENCE, THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY

All of us, we moderns, suppose we know roughly what science is. But, what we know is the word science in its narrower, reductionist sense. It is used today to denote a knowledge of nature that is quantitative and objective as we have witnessed in the preceding chapter. However, the conventional and reductionist notion of science, or "scientific knowledge" which Voegelin identifies as a "scientistic creed"[2] is proper not to political inquiry but, if anywhere, to natural or physical sciences. Viewed on the basis of a recognition that there is a fundamental, ontological difference between human reality and physical reality, the ontological difference itself determines or dictates the choice of method in different sciences. There is, therefore, a fundamental methodological difference between what is political scientific and what is natural scientific. However, the dictum, "after the method of the natural sciences," is undoubtedly the key to what many positivists of political science believed to be the right

[2] According to Voegelin, the "scientistic creed" implies two great denials: "it denies the dignity of science to the quest for substance in nature, in man and society, as well as in transcendental reality; and, in the more radical form, it denies the reality of substance." E. Voegelin, "The Origins of Scientism," *Social Research*, 15:4 (1948), p.462.

objective for the discipline. In fact, what is understood to be science by political positivists is the conceptions and techniques of the physical or natural sciences. But we shall misconceive political reality if we confine political inquiry within this strait-jacket. The method of the natural sciences is not the only way to conceive of the nature of knowing in general, nor a proper way to conceive the political knowledge in particular. There are other kinds of understanding of science, that is, other ways to knowledge of reality. For example, revivalists of political theory manifest that the most immediate and particular relevance to political inquiry is the philosophical, philosophical knowledge or philosophical science.

Indeed, it is a curious and distinctive feature of contemporary political inquiry that we use the term "science" and "theory" to encompass understanding in both the scientific and philosophical senses. The possibility of confusion comes from the fact that the terms are used in both ways, more accurately, in both "doxic or hypothetical and epistemic or existential senses."[3] Lest the differences between these two ways be misunderstood, it should be

[3] For the distinction between the two modes of knowledge, Eugene Webb expounds: "What is characteristic of knowing in the hypothetical or doxic mode is that it speculates regarding the external existence, apart from the knower, as a reality sketched out in an hypothesis or speculative model (*doxa*). For example, one catches a glimpse of a strange object, then develops a concept or speculative schema (*doxa*) that may fit it, and finally confirms the fit by closer observation. Epistemic or existential knowledge, on the other hand, which for Voegelin is the proper sphere of philosophy, is the knowledge in which the tension of existence, the love of the divine ground, becomes conscious to itself and commits itself to live in fidelity to its love; for this kind of knowledge is not a matter of mere observation of fact but of clarifying, opening up, and rendering conscious and available the possibilities implicit in existence in its fullness." Eugene Webb, *Eric Voegelin: Philosopher of History* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), pp.105-13.

acknowledged that, like behavioralism, traditionalism (or philosophical science of politics) claims to be a form of political *science*, indeed both of them have at one time or another been called a "new political science." Both of them also claim to be empirically oriented. They claim to be realistic; they are seeking knowledge about the realities of the political world as experienced. However, an unfortunate consequence of this ambiguity and confusion is, I believe, that we sometimes imagine that we are understanding the political reality itself when we are actually pursuing hypothetical or doxic knowledge about it. At this point, it is essential to decide in what sense the political reality is to be understood. The next chapter examines the ontological, noble meaning of political reality as developed by Voegelin. The scientistic, or hypothetical understanding of political reality is "the blind transference of the methodolatry to the study of political reality."[4] With regard to this point, Sandoz explicates:

> The most comprehensive knowledge of political reality is attained primarily through a *philosophical* investigation, not through one narrowly modeled on the supposed "methodology" of the natural sciences. This means that in contradistinction to the prevailing paradigm of American political science, there need be no preoccupation with phenomena, no naturalistic reduction, no restriction of "reason" to inferential reasoning, no juxtaposing of "traditional" and "behavioral" schools, no dogmatic postulation of assumptions or doctrine, no specious fact-value

[4] Hwa Yol Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding* (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University Press, 1979), p.65.

dichotomy, and no systems of political thought.[5]

As a response to the intrusion of positivist doxical dogma into the tradition of political theory, Voegelin redefines the meaning of "science" and "theory" in political science in accordance with the traditional and prepositivist conception of theory and political inquiry. Much of Voegelin's treatment of the basic issues of political inquiry is to be found in his historical studies of the use of these terms. He has mastered "a technical philosophical vocabulary developed by the Greeks of antiquity, one employed with persistence down to the present." And he "uses it as the indispensable instrument for elucidating in a precisely meaningful way the phenomena of political existence to which he addresses himself."[6] In Voegelin's meaning, thus, the restoration of political theory is essentially the revival of the traditional concept of science and theory and a return to the classical Platonic-Aristotelian conception of political science.

From the perspective of this approach, an adequate understanding of politics, or political reality requires tracing phenomena back to their ontic roots. Hence, whenever Voegelin makes "theory" and "science" as such an

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[5] E. Sandoz, "The Philosophical Science of Politics Beyond Behavioralism," in George J. Graham, Jr., & George W. Carey, eds., *The Post-Behavioral Era: Perspectives on Political Science* (New York: David McKay Co., 1972), p.296.

[6] E. Sandoz, "The Foundations of Voegelin's Political Theory," *Political Science Reviewer*, 1 (Fall 1971), p.34.

explicit theme for discussion, he is concerned with the epistemic or existential sense. This becomes clear by Voegelin's insistence on a generic understanding of science as *episteme*. The term science comes from the medieval Latin *scientia* which is derived from *scire*, "to know." *Scientia* itself is a translation of the Greek *episteme*, knowledge. In the classical setting the two fundamentally different ways of knowledge--knowledge of existence from within and knowledge of existence from without--were designated by the distinctions of *episteme* and *doxa*. *Episteme* is a term for the experientially rooted mode of knowing of *nous*, which enables man, as an existent, to participate consciously in transcendent reality. That is, what can truly lay claim to the title of *episteme* is only the knowledge of being "in itself"; the knowledge of being in the manifold of things is *doxa*.[7] In the onto-epistemic notion of science, *episteme*, or that which brings man into a conscious contact with reality, was seen as distinct from *doxa*. The question of the distinctions and relations between *episteme* and *doxa* is of central importance for Voegelin. *Episteme* has been one of central terms in his own analysis of philosophical knowing as an existential process, because epistemic knowledge implies existential knowledge. Thus, to be truly science, any science must be philosophically, or, more

[7] The object of knowledge (*episteme*) is identified by the Parmenidian term "being." But, the object of opining cannot be "not-being," for of the Parmenidian "not-being" we have no knowledge at all. Hence, *Doxa* is a faculty of the soul in between knowledge and ignorance, while its object correspondingly must be a realm "between" (*metaxy*) "being" and "not-being." E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.3, *Plato and Aristotle*, p.66. Hereafter abbreviated as *OH*, III.

accurately, ontologically oriented, insofar as it concerns itself with conceiving of human reality.

The Voegelinian notion of science is not demanding that there must be two separate orders in the logic of scientific inquiry, one for the political inquiry and the other for natural sciences. Rather, it maintains that the respective "objects" they investigate are qualitatively different. Unlike physical nature which does not experience itself, only man experiences himself as well as other people in society and other things in nature. As Alfred Schutz contends,

> The world of nature, as explored by the natural scientist, does not "mean" anything to molecules, atoms, and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist--social reality--has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the human beings living, acting, and thinking within it.8

Here we encounter a new notion of experience radically different from the conventional one that forms the empirical basis of political science. Experience--more specifically, existential experience--embraces man's participation in multiple dimensions of reality; it includes confrontations and relations that extend far beyond the limits of sensory perception and reflections on phenomenal regularities.

> It is not man the animal, nor much less man the sentient integer, but man the political living being in the fullness of his *humanity* that science seeks to

8 Alfred Schutz, *Collected Papers*, vol.1: *The Problems of Social Reality*, Maurice Natanson, ed. (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1962), p.59.

> know and to assist toward a well-ordered and happy existence...[I]n the new science of politics the entire range and all the modes of man's experience become resources from which may be drawn by way of rational inquiry the knowledge of reality and its order...The existential foundation of the science of politics, and the very source of scientific *objectivity*, is man's prescientific participation in all of the realms of being from the somatic and simply sentient to moral, aesthetic and mystical levels of experience. This existential participation is the means whereby man attunes himself with reality and gains the primordial grip on the whole of being which is the foundation of all knowledge.9

To put it in Voegelin's own words,

> Science starts from the prescientific existence of man, from his participation in the world with his body, soul, intellect, and spirit, from his primary grip on all the realms of being that is assured to him because his own nature is their epitome.[10]

Man's very humanity is established by the presence of the unique faculty of *nous*. It is this noetic experience which sets the parameters and establishes the characteristics proper to the Greek notion of science. "The enterprise of science is guided, not by a methodology, but rather by the knower's sense of theoretical relevance. As such, science was seen essentially as an attempt to consciously elucidate reality--an open reality understood as a horizon into which man is drawn by a multiplicity of

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[9] E. Sandoz, "The Philosophical Science...," pp.296, 298.

[10] E. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1952), p.4. Hereafter *NSP*.

promised meanings."[11] It is this particular conception of science which is retained in the statement of Voegelin: "Science is a search for truth concerning the nature of the various realms of being."[12] Voegelin's use of the term political science is, therefore, consistent with the Aristotelian concept of an *episteme politike* and not with corrupted contemporary usages by behavioralists and others.[13] In the conventional sense, Voegelin's "new science of politics," or onto-epistemic conception of science is "neither science nor new."[14] As William Havard states, "[i]t is far easier to make dogmatic assertions about the meaning of science and to relegate Voegelin to the status of a 'metaphysician,' or 'worse,' than to come to grips with his work."[15] For example, Robert Dahl, a leading proponent of political behavioralism, reproaches that Voegelin "has not only 'un-defined' science; he has 'un-scienced' it."[16] However, "all Voegelin has done is to 'unscience' positivism"[17]; that is, to break through the

[11] James Wiser, "Political Theory, Personal Knowledge, and Public Truth," *Journal of Politics*, 36:3 (1974), p.663.

[12] *NSP*, p.4.

[13] See Dante Germino, *Beyond Ideology: The Revival of Political Theory*, pp.167ff, and "Eric Voegelin's *Anamnesis*," *Southern Review*, 7 (1971), p.69.

[14] Gregor Sebba, "Prelude and Variations on the Theme of Eric Voegelin," in E. Sandoz, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Thought: A Critical Appraisal* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982), p.20.

[15] William Havard, Jr., "Notes on Voegelin's Contributions to Political Theory," E. Sandoz, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Thought*, p.89.

[16] Robert Dahl, "The Science of Politics: Old and New," *World Politics*, 7 (1955), p.489.

[17] E. Sandoz, "Introduction," in Sandoz, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Thought*, p.X.

parochial narrowness of positivist political studies, and to restore the true and literal conception of *episteme politike*. He does not ignore the importance of positivistic and technical knowledge nor the impact it has had upon political inquiry. The major purpose of Voegelin's criticism of scientistic tradition is not to suppose

> the behavioral approach and the techniques of quantification to be simply *useless* to political science. The point rather is that the science *qua* science must not itself be defined with methodology as the controlling criterion. This is of crucial importance since the key issues of political science cannot be studied with the methodology of the mathematizing sciences but require the employment of other methods. In short, the study of political behavior is a part (not the whole) of political science, nor is it the most important part.[18]

However, Voegelin has been decisive in thinking since his twenties that the state of contemporary political science has been mired by its immersion in the behavioralism's ancestors such as neo-Kantian epistemology, value-related methodology, historicism, descriptive institutionalism and ideological historical speculations, could be overcome only by with the restoration of a "new science of politics."[19] Voegelin's "new science" alludes to the tradition of Giambattista Vico's *Scienza Nuova*, *New Science*. Defying the restrictive claims of the scientific ideal of the

[18] E. Sandoz, "The Science and Demonology of Politics," *Intercollegiate Review*, 5:2 (Winter 1968-69), p.121.

[19] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.7. Cited in Dante Germino, "Eric Voegelin's *Anamnesis*," pp.69-70; and, E. Voegelin, "Consciousness and Order: Forward to *Anamnesis*," in Fred Lawrence, ed., *The Beginning and the Beyond* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), p.35.

seventeenth century, Vico founded a conception of *New Science* which expresses the revolt against the unhistorical Cartesian notion of science that dominated European scholarship at the time.[20] However, unlike Vico, Voegelin does not mean that he himself "[has] founded a new science, but rather [has] pulled together the widely scattered results of a 'process of re-theoretization' that had been going on in different sciences for the last half century."[21]

To Voegelin, as Dante Germino writes, "political 'science' and political 'theory' are inseparably bound together."[22] With regard to Voegelin's analogical usage of *episteme* (science, or knowledge) and *theoria* (theory), Eugene Webb expounds:

> *Episteme* and *theoria* were the terms used by certain classical philosophers, as discussed by Voegelin, for the reflective illumination of this experienced movement of transcendence. Since the former term has disappeared and its Latin equivalent, *scientia*, has been preempted in modern usage to describe the natural sciences, it is the word "theory," as Voegelin uses it at least, that carries the classical meaning forward. It does so, that is, as best it can under the circumstances, since "theory," too, has largely been preempted in the doxically oriented modern setting to serve as a term for speculative hypotheses.[23]

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[20] For a discussion of Vico's foundation of new science, see Helmut Viechtbauer, "Giambattista Vico and the Foundation of Science," in Peter J. Opitz & Gregor Sebba, eds., *The Philosophy of Order: Essays on History, Consciousness and Politics* (Stuttgart, W. Germany: Ernst Klett, 1981), pp.406-415.

[21] Gerhart Niemeyer, "Eric Voegelin's Achievement," *Modern Age*, 9:2 (Spring 1965), p.133.

[22] D. Germino, *Beyond Ideology*, P.163.

[23] B. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.108.

In the accustomed, modern usage, theory, like science, "bears the unmistakable imprimatur of the Cartesian framework."[24] That is, a theory consists of explanatory devices; and, it is also a generalization or set of generalizations which explain general statements or propositions or other theories by relating them one to another in a larger conceptual scheme in which the generalizations find a place and are thereby explained. In other words, "choices about research topics, methods, materials, evidence, conclusions, explanations, and expositions revolve around conceptions of theory."[25] And, political positivists "push a conception of theory which makes it synonymous with scientific endeavor as a whole. Thereby they imply that all properly scientific studies of politics (and nothing else) constitutes political theory."[26] From this viewpoint, political theory is a methodologically conditioned body, whose task is to serve as the handmaiden of research into behavioral regularities on the phenomenal level by producing ideal types, models and the like.

In the scientistic and parochial account of the term, theory should be intelligible to any investigator who uses properly objective scientific methodology; the demands are not on the observer but only on the method, and the observer

[24] Patricia Lewis Poteat, *Walker Percy and the Old Modern Age: Reflections on Language, Argument, and the Telling of Stories* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1985), p.14.

[25] John S. Nelson, "Natures and Futures for Political Theory," in J.S. Nelson, ed., *What Should Political Theory Be Now?* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1983), p.5.

[26] Ibid., p.5.

is supposed to be personally disengaged from the subject matter under study.[27] Not only has scientism clearly emphasized objective knowledge or objects but has besides sought to prevent the knowing subject from having an influence on what is known. The dubious remedy proffered by scientistic tradition is to overcome subjectivity entirely by generalization and abstraction. In other words, the object known must be known or knowable in exactly the same way to others. This is guaranteed by methodology; indeed, so intimate is the relationship between science (in the modern sense) and scientific methods that we tend to identify science with scientific methodology. Everyone who uses the same method or tool in investigating an object should be able to derive the same answer or "understanding" about the object, the same conclusion. "From this point of view, any two investigators should arrive at mutually confirming observations provided their methodology and the theory itself"--in this case, theory in [the] scientistic sense, or in [the] form of *doxa*--"is sound."[28] The final test of theory becomes the extent to which observation has

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[27] A twentieth-century hermeneutician, Hans-Georg Gadamer also discusses the role of personal existential involvement in theoretical understanding. "Perhaps we may remind the reader of the idea of sacral communion which lies behind the original Greek idea of theoria...In the same way, Greek metaphysics still conceives the nature of theoria and of nous as pure presence to what is truly equal, and also the capacity to be able to act theoretically is defined for us by the fact that in attending to something it is possible to forget one's own purposes. But theoria is not to be conceived primarily as an attitude of subjectivity, as a self-determination of the subjective consciousness, but in terms of what it is contemplating. Theoria is a true sharing, not something active, but something passive (pathos), namely being totally involved in and carried away by what one sees." H.-G. Gadamer, *Truth and Method* (New York: Crossroad, 1975), p.111.

[28] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.112.

been accurate and the methodology has been careful and unprejudiced. This is measured not by a qualitative standard but by a quantitative one: the more people who make observations and, using carefully-followed methodology, come up with the same conclusion, the more valid that conclusion is. Therefore, the methodological rigor is the necessary coefficient for the formation of a judgment on which they claim universal validity.

This methodolatrous scientistic tradition, or "method fetishism" in Hilary Putnam's terms,[29] has drowned the true and literal sense of theory. For example, the majority of contemporary political scientists who judge all political theory in terms of methodological rigor and the fact-value dichotomy, have easily labelled the thinker who conceives of political theory as the experiential science of order, based on the total experience of the existing human person, a doctrinaire or metaphysician. And the thinker's claims to scientific status have been dismissed with contempt. The thinker seems to be scarcely noticed by the majority unless his influence becomes a causative ideational factor in the struggle of the political market-place or unless his thought becomes a significant source for a new dominant paradigm.

Indeed, Voegelin's work which represents such thought is incapable of being understood by most political positivists on its own terms. However, the academic enterprise searching for reality is not necessarily a sphere

[29] Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.188.

where majority rule works. Even though Voegelin's work is hardly understood by the majority of modern intellectuals, he must be approached on his own terms because, otherwise, one cannot proceed very far in appreciating his thought. The "revolutionary quality of Voegelin's political science" may remain a mere scholarly curiosity, if one employs "the language of a political science establishment dedicated to scientism and dogmatically committed to quantification of the subject matter of politics in the positivistic mode--and equally committed to the neglect of those sectors of political reality which do not lend themselves to treatment by this method."[30]

Theory, as Voegelin primarily uses the term, refers to knowledge (*episteme*) that is the conscious expression of immediate experience and that has become explicit through adequate symbolization. Therefore, in his sense of the term it is essential that theoretical understanding makes existential demands of the inquirer. Theory, he defines,

> is not just any opining about human existence in society; it rather is an attempt at formulating the meaning of existence by explicating the content of a definite class of experiences. Its argument is not arbitrary but derives its validity from the aggregate of experiences to which it must permanently refer for empirical control.[31]

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[30] E. Sandoz, "The Sciene and Demonology...," p.121.

[31] *NSP*, p.64.

As a science it is that *episteme theoretike* which Plato and Aristotle called *philosophia* which Voegelin defines as "a truthful account of structure of reality," not new but renewed by taking into account what has become known since the Greeks.[32] According to Voegelin, the substance of reality is "the luminous tension of existence," and the luminosity of this tension is what constitutes *episteme* or *theoria*.[33] What is to be added here is that theory is a "type of noetic construction and communication between mature human beings,"[34] and, therefore, "theorist" must be what Aristotle called a *spoudaios* or mature man, one whose character has been formed by the aggregate of experiences which theory inquires into.

> The *spoudaios* is the man who has maximally actualized the potentialities of human nature, who has formed his character into habitual actualization of the dianoetic and ethical virtues, the man who at the fullest of his development is capable of the *bios theoretikos*.[35]

Theory seems not so much a technical term describing meaningful communication between human beings as opposed to mere *doxa*.[36] It exemplifies simultaneously the highest form

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[32] G. Sebba, "Prelude and Variations...", p.20.

[33] More details on what Voegelin terms the "tension of existence" is presented in the next chapter.

[34] John William Corrington, "Order and Consciousness/ Consciousness and History: The New Program of Voegelin," in Stephen A. McKnight, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Search for Order in History* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1978), p.166.

[35] *NSP*, p.64.

[36] J.W. Corrington, "Order and Consciousness...," p.166.

of communicative consciousness, grounded in the *bios theoretikos*, the life of reason and contemplation. "Unless a theoretical exposition activates the corresponding experiences at least to a degree, it will create the impression of empty talk or will perhaps be rejected as an irrelevant expression of subjective opinions. A theoretical debate can be conducted only among *spoudaioi* in the Aristotelian sense; theory has no argument against a man who feels, or pretends to feel, unable to re-enact the experience. Historically, as a consequence, the discovery of theoretical truth may not at all find acceptance in the surrounding society."[37]

In this context, Voegelin emphasizes the aristocratic nature of the discovery of theoretical truth. According to him, again following classical thought, empirically all men are not of equal quality, and hence all men do not have an equal access to the most important truths. In other words, all or most of the individuals in a society cannot become a *spoudaios* or philosopher-king. This could never happen because the multitude is not philosophical, or theoretical. Nor is the multitude "theorist" in its classical sense. Only a few or even only one person can be really theoretical or philosophical. Voegelin writes:

> [T]heory cannot be developed under all conditions by everybody. The theorist need perhaps not be a paragon of virtue himself, but he must, at least, be capable of imaginative re-enactment of the experiences

[37] *NSP*, pp.64-65.

> of which theory is an explication...[T]heory as an explication of certain experiences is intelligible only to those in whom the explication will stir up parallel experiences as the empirical basis for testing the truth of theory.[38]

However, it should be noted that, unlike the modern methodological solipsism, for the classical political theory, its authority and universality is grounded in the ontological substance of an independent reality. A claim to universality is not rooted in the possibility of proof or in the hope of eventual agreement but rather in the theorist's commitment to the universal quality of *nous* itself. This claim of universal validity appears to be paradoxical because the discovery and elucidation of truth is characterized by the aristocratic, personal and historical conditions of its emergence. However, although emerging from within a personal or existential achievement, truth is understood to be discovered by the "rational" or noetic element in man, the very faculty which, by definition, is common to all men. Given this understanding, "the noetic achievement of truth is a representative act, and its appearance carries with it the implications of a universal validity."[39]

In the work of Michael Polanyi, we can find a clear contemporary expression of the association of the personal and the universal as contained within the noetic experience.

[38] Ibid., p.64.

[39] J. Wiser, "Political Theory, Personal Knowledge, and Public Truth," pp.663-664.

According to him, personal knowledge can and does claim a universal validity. By regarding all knowledge as personal, Polanyi maintains that personal involvement assumes a form of involvement which does not imply subjectivity. That is to say, grounding knowledge in personal commitment does not lead to subjectivism. Although Polanyi emphasizes the personal commitment in scientific inquiry, his concept of the *personal* is not a defense of a radical subjectivity: for he clearly distinguishes between the *personal* in us that actually enters into commitments and the *subjective* states in which we merely endure feelings. The concept of personal transcends the distinction between subjective and objective, and, thus, claims to universality. Polanyi denotes that:

> Such is the *personal participation* of the knower in all acts of understanding. But this does not make our understanding *subjective*. Comprehension is neither an arbitrary act nor a passive experience, but a responsible act claiming universal validity. Such knowing is indeed *objective* in the sense of establishing contact with a hidden reality; a contact that is defined as the condition for anticipating an indeterminate range of yet unknown (and perhaps yet inconceivable) true implications.[40]

An attempt must also be made to understand what is meant by "philosophy" in the Voegelinian posture, an important task because the term is sometimes used ambiguously, and not only by "philosophers." Voegelin does not present a standard philosophical argument of the sort

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[40] Michael Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), pp.vii-viii.

that leads the reader from premises to a conclusion through the force of formal logic. This might "make it sound as if he is a dogmatic thinker; but that would be to return to the supposition that a philosopher's aim must be to present and win assent for a doctrine."[41] Voegelin, however, has a quite different conception of philosophy which is difficult to grasp for any person accustomed to the more common type of philosophical exposition. Most of the accustomed definition of philosophy implies that philosophy deals with the systematic body of general principles and assumptions underlying a particular field of experience. Thus, it is supposed that there are philosophies of science, education, art, music, history, law, mathematics, and of religion. In addition, for the modern mind, philosophical discourse is also understood as what tends to maintain both a dispassionate attitude and a clear distinction between the language of philosophy and that of theology, or between reason and faith. However, Voegelin uses the terms science, theory and philosophy interchangeably, and somewhat analogically. Indeed, in the classical notion, political science, political theory and political philosophy are essentially one and the same.

Like the terms science and theory, "philosophy" has lost its original meaning and has come to be used to refer to what Plato called "philodoxy," the love of opinions. Voegelin denotes that through gnostic derailment in the

[41] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.5.

modern history the term "philodoxy" eventually dropped out of use as its meaning was absorbed into "philosophy."[42]

> [W]e have an abundance of philodoxers in reality; and since the Platonic term for their designation is lost, we refer to them as philosophers. In modern usage, thus, we call philosophers precisely the persons to whom Plato as a philosopher was in opposition...[W]e think of philodoxers when we speak of philosophers. The Platonic conception of a philosopher-king, furthermore, is so utterly strange to us because our imagination substitutes a philodoxer for the philosopher intended by Plato.[43]

This echoes Karl Jaspers' statement:

> It seemed to me that the philosophy of the academicians was not really philosophy; instead, with its claims to be a science, it seemed to be entirely a discussion of things which are not essential for the basic questions of our existence. In my own consciousness I myself was not originally a philosopher. But when the intellectual world is empty of philosophy, it becomes the task at least to bear witness to philosophy, to direct the attention to the great philosophers, to try to stop confusion, and to encourage in our youth the interest in real philosophy.[44]

In short, Voegelin radicalizes the definition of philosophy by replacing a static, modernist notion with a dynamic, classical meaning of it. For him, philosophical thought cannot take the customary form of a logical argument, because philosophy involves a process in which the

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[42] With regard to this point, Voegelin remarks that "the history of philosophy is in the largest part the history of its derailment." *OH*, III, p.82, 277.

[43] Ibid., pp.65-66.

[44] Karl Jaspers, "Philosophical Autobiography," in Paul Arthur Schlipp, ed., *The Philosophy of Karl Jaspers* (New York: Tudor, 1957), p.34.

philosopher unfolds and clarifies his own formative experiences. "For philosophy as a symbolic form is distinguished from myth and history by its reflective self-consciousness. What philosophy is, need not be ascertained by talking *about* philosophy discursively; it can, and must, be determined by entering *into* the speculative process in which the thinker explicates his experience of order."[45] Hence, Voegelin defines philosophy in a true and deeper, but somewhat different and strange way to the modern ear:

> Philosophy is the love of being through love of divine Being as the source of its order. The Logos of being is the object proper of philosophical inquiry; and the search for truth concerning the order of being cannot be conducted without diagnosing the modes of existence in untruth. The truth of order has to be gained and regained in the perpetual struggle against the fall from it; and the movement toward truth starts from a man's awareness of his existence in untruth. The diagnostic and therapeutic functions are inseparable in philosophy as a form of existence.[46]

Philosophy is not simply an academic subject matter, but an active struggle for truth, moral, spiritual, and intellectual; it is a process that takes place in a field of tension between justice and injustice, between *episteme* and *doxa*, and between existential truth and untruth.[47] As Voegelin states regarding Plato's conception of philosophy, the "philosopher does not exist in a social vacuum, but in

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[45] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.II, *The World of the Polis*, hereafter, *OH*, II, p.170.

[46] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.I, *Israel and Revelation*, hereafter, *OH*, I, p.xiv.

[47] *OH*, III, pp.63-68.

opposition to the sophist."[48] Based on this perspective, Voegelin employs the word philosophy in generic, literal sense, and in what he takes to be its Platonic sense, *philosophia*. Literally, it is the love (*philia*) of wisdom (*sophia*), which is "not a disengagement but an ordering event of *philia*." Philosophy is not commensurate with the systematic possession of knowledge, because "love is not possession but longing, and all the knowledge love gives is the knowledge of what it is one loves."[49]

But, the philodoxer seeks the security of possession that will put an end to longing; the tension of longing may feel too painful; thus, he may resist it, or prefer an illusion of certainty to the challenge of epistemic existence in truth. Voegelin uses the term *scotosis* (darkening), which is used by Bernard Lonergan, for the voluntary closure against reality, and interprets it as a major source of philodoxic thinking.[50] On the contrary, the philosopher has only the continuing pain and insecurity that are the essential correlates of love. The philodoxer also suspects that the love of the lover is "merely subjective." He seeks to disguise the love by reducing it to subjectivity. On the contrary, to the philosopher the love is experienced as objectively real. The philosopher does

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[48] Ibid., p.63.

[49] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.117.

[50] Voegelin uses the term *scotosis* in "What Is Political Reality," *Anamnesis* (German), p.201, citing Lonergan's *Insight*, pp.191-203.

not make it up arbitrarily, but suffers it as a passion. It is the pull (*helkein*) which initiates his own philosophical inquiry, or philosophical seeking (*zetesis*).[51]

In Voegelin's sense, the philosopher does not produce systems or philosophies, he only "philosophizes."[52] Voegelin's conception of philosophizing situates philosophy firmly within the historical world and within the concrete existence of the philosopher. He emphasizes that the enterprise of philosophy stems from the experiential perspective. In his terms, the experience of existential tension, with its "ordering truth," stands in the center of philosophy. The philosopher is one who dwells consciously and freely in what Voegelin has come to call the "tension of existence" and this means that he must experience the tension and be willing to acknowledge it and the demands it makes on his existence. Philosophy, therefore, as Voegelin conceives it, and unlike the doxical interpretation of it, is not a subject matter, or a collection of propositions, opinions, and arguments, but an existential event, in which the principle of order in the experiential tension is raised into consciousness and freely affirmed.[53] "In historical reality," says Voegelin, "a philosopher's truth is the exegesis of his experience."[54] Truth lies at the level of

[51] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.118.

[52] G. Sebba, "Prelude and Variations...," p.5.

[53] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (English version), trans. & ed. by Gerhart Niemeyer (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1978) p.136; German edition, p.276.

[54] E. Voegelin, "On Hegel:: A Study in Sorcery," *Studium Generale*, 24 (1971), p.344.

experience, not at the level of the ideational construct or the propositions and symbolisms which articulate its content, the experience.[55] That is, philosophy in Voegelin's sense, or in its essential reality, is not a system construction, nor a set of ideas or opinions but a phase of an existential process in which one experiences and freely yields oneself to the tension of existence. In other words, the tension of existence is the deep longing of the soul for truth and for fullness of life, the pull at the core of the philosopher's being toward a goal.

Also, philosophy is a process in which the philosopher seeks to enter into more adequate and comprehensive participation in the possibilities that existence holds open to him--to enact, in other words, the love of being.[56] But, in the case of man, this participation takes, in addition to its bodily form, the form of consciousness. Participation (Plato's *methexis*, Aristotle's *metalepsis*) forms the human consciousness (*psyche*) itself, the essence of man's nature and humanity. "Consciousness," defines Voegelin, "is the experience of participation, participation of man in his ground of being."[57] The "existential participation is the means whereby man attunes himself with reality and gains the primordial grip on the whole of being which is the

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[55] E. Sandoz, "The Philosophical Science...," pp.297, 298.

[56] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.90.

[57] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (English), p.175.

foundation of all knowledge."[58] In this sense, by seeking consciousness, the philosopher seeks knowledge--not just any knowledge, but the knowledge that is self-reflective clarity of consciousness itself. As Sandoz states, therefore, on the existential side, philosophy denotes "an erotic tension to the Ground of reality (being, *ousia*), a passion of mind (*nous*) which mediates the distance between the seeking knower (*zetein*) and the reality sought and known." However, what is sought and appropriated as 'known' is "only a fragment of the truth that Is; the insights gained are partial and provisional, but they are within these limits nonetheless validated to the exhaustion of rationality and evidence."[59]

It should be noted that, for Voegelin, as for Plato, philosophy has a "diagnostic and therapeutic" function. The opposing pairs of concepts developed by Plato--justice and injustice, episteme and doxa, truth and untruth--"must be understood in their aggregate as the expression of a man's resistance to a social corruption which goes so deep that it affects the truth of existence under God. Philosophy, thus, has its origin in the resistance of the soul to its destruction by society. Philosophy...[is] an act of resistance illuminated by conceptual understanding."[60] "Philosophy in antiquity, that is to say, philosophy par

[58] E. Sandoz, "The Philosophical Science...," p.298.

[59] Ibid., pp.296-297.

[60] *OH*, III, p.68.

excellence, is existential in the sense of being a life lived in resistance to untruth out of a love of wisdom experienced as divine, for only God is wise."[61] Philosophy, as the "love of being through the love of divine Being as the source of its order," illuminates for us the "modes of existence in untruth." And the substance of history will be discovered to consist "in the experiences in which man gains the understanding of his humanity and together with it the understanding of its limits."[62] These experiences cannot be ignored by the political inquirer, but must be empirically examined and critically evaluated for the light which they shed upon his own search for the truth about order in human society.

From this vantage point, it is evident that for Voegelin political science is a form of philosophy itself. Thus, political knowledge presupposes the ability of man to maintain the form of philosophical existence-in-tension. Voegelin's basic stance on the philosophical investigation of politics or reality is well manifested in the following statement:

> The decisive event in the establishment of *politike episteme* was the specifically philosophical realization that the levels of being discernible within the world are surmounted by a transcendent source of being and its order. And this insight was itself rooted in the real movements of the human spiritual soul toward divine being experienced as transcendent. In the experience of love for the world-transcendent origin

[61] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1981), p.24.

[62] *NSP*, p.78.

> of being, in *philia* toward the *sophon* (the wise), in *eros* toward the *agathon* (the good) and the *kalon* (the beautiful), man became philosopher. From these experiences arose the image of the order of being. At the opening of the soul...the order of being becomes visible even to its ground and origin in the beyond, in the Platonic *epekeina* in which the soul participates as it suffers and achieves its opening.[63]

In short, from the Voegelinian perspective, the aim of philosophy, more accurately, of philosophical science of politics is to move beyond opinion to knowledge, beyond appearance to reality, beyond surface manifestation to essential structure. The effort to transcend the realm of opinion and acquire knowledge is at the same time an effort to open one's soul to the dimension of reality which is beyond the purely immanent. And the opening of the soul, or tension towards openness is what Voegelin means by philosophy.

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[63] E. Voegelin, *Science, Politics, and Gnosticism* (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1968), p.18. Hereafter *SPG*.

2. POSITIVISM: THE PERVERSION OF SCIENCE

Positivism Revisited

Based on a delving of the proper meaning of science, theory, and philosophy in political inquiry, Voegelin examines, in *The New Science of Politics*, the foundation of positivistic tradition. By positivism Voegelin meant an historical phenomenon that endeavored to apply the methods of post-Galilean physics to the nonphysical as well. For the positivist criterion of science is a methodological one and the methods in question are those of the mathematizing natural sciences and physics in particular. That is to say, the essence of positivism is to make method--specifically, the method of the physical sciences--the criterion for judging whether the cognition of an object is scientific, and, therefore, objective or merely subjective opinion.

This transposition of methods implies the denial of the qualitative differences between what is human and what is merely natural. That is, political positivism treats political behavior as if it is a physical object. The object in political positivism is to apply the methods already proved in the natural sciences and only when this is done can we claim to have a "scientific" understanding of politics and society. Methodologically speaking, thus, the political positivism claims that political or human sciences are amenable to the same treatments or technique of the natural sciences in the name of causal explanation and

prediction. Even though it maintains, to a certain degree, the difference between the behavioral and the natural, it succumbs nonetheless to the "canons of scientific method." Leaving aside the question of how correctly the positivist have pictured the procedures of natural science, one problem with this position lies in the unexamined assumption that the areas of natural and social sciences are sufficiently similar to justify the application of the same investigatory methods.

But it should be noted that human beings transcend the physical realm as physical science conceives it: they are persons acting in a multiplicity of dimensions of being that transcend the quantitative, physical, biological and psychological dimension of reality. Even though "there is a necessary connection between natural and social reality," and "each real society is in fact a particular human solution to a number of natural needs traceable to the nature of man and his place in the universe," as David Levy argues, "this is not in itself sufficient warrant for the positivist programme."[64] There is no one model of "science" universally applicable to all reality, as people have sometimes taken theoretical physics to be, for there is no one type of object that the various branches of knowledge study. "The criterion for scientific status is not conformity to model 'X' of what a science should be like,

[64] David J. Levy, "What is Social Reality?" *Philosophy Today*, 24:4 (Winter 1980), pp.326-327. Reprinted in D.J. Levy, *Realism: An Essay in Interpretation and Social Reality* (Manchester: Carcanet New Press, 1981), pp.4-5.

but adequacy of range and method to the object studied. The range and method of the inquirer should be rationally defensible and the grounds for his procedure should be publically available."[65] It is mistaken, therefore, to think that methods suited to the study of nature can really give us insight into the non-natural, specifically human characteristics of behavior in the political realm. Voegelin says,

> Different objects require different methods. A political scientist who tries to understand the meaning of Plato's *Republic* will not have much use for mathematics; a biologist who studies a cell structure will not have much use for methods of classical philology and principles of hermeneutics.[66]

Let us examine Voegelin's contrast between the methods appropriate to the study of cell structure and those suitable to the understanding of Plato's *Republic*.[67] It may be asked, "why are the methods of the mathematizing natural sciences suitable to the study of cell structure but not to the understanding of Plato's *Republic*?" In both cases the inquirer finds himself in the presence of data having existence in the external natural world. In both cases the inquirer wishes to understand that data. Both the biological cell and Plato's *Republic* can be shown to possess

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[65] D. Levy, "What is Social...," p.327; *Realism*, p.4.

[66] *NSP*, p.5.

[67] Examining the contrast between the methods, I am indebted to Levy's account. See, D. Levy, "What is Social...," pp.327-38; *Realism*, pp.4-5.

an inherent structure and an adequate understanding of each can be seen to involve proper identification of structure. Nevertheless, the structures in question exist on different levels. In the case of the biological cell, one is said to have understood when he has described as fully as he can the physical relationships that exist between the component molecules that make it up. These molecules are, in principle, directly observable and the relationships that exist between them can be ideally expressed in the precise language of mathematics. In the case of biological cell, a brief formula or physical model will tell us more about its structure than a lengthy verbal description which takes account, among other things, of the way such a cell originates.

In the case of Plato's *Republic*, mere description of the observable components will hardly yield the same results. Here the observable data are words, and though it is possible to identify a linguistic structure, that of ancient Greek, in some sense equivalent to the structural form found to exist between the component molecules of a cell, the understanding of the *Republic* obviously involves something more than the descriptive formulation of that structure. "To understand a text involves, something more than understanding the syntax and vocabulary of the language in which it is written. We have knowledge of a biological cell at the point at which we have identified its physical structure but to know a text involves the understanding of

its meaning and the term 'meaning' signifies more than the grammatical sense of the sentences. Interpretation of texts presupposes knowledge of the relevant syntax and vocabulary, but such knowledge is only the necessary first stage in the attempt to understand meaning, Plato's *Republic* is not a succession of words so much as an inherently meaningful argument whose meaning is known by reference to the intentions of its author and the circumstances of its composition."[68]

What is true of a particular text is found on examination to be true of every sphere of reality in which man is creatively involved. The field of human physical existence is the world of nature, but the object of political knowledge is the world of political existence and the characteristic of the political world is that it is a world of meaning in which the items of experience have already been organized in accordance with subjectively meaningful categories of the inhabitant.[69] According to Alfred Schutz, this means that the sciences dealing with human reality have to develop particular devices foreign to the natural sciences, interpretative or hermeneutic techniques and procedures adequate to the understanding of a realm of reality already structured by human consciousness. There is, as Schutz argues,

[68] D. Levy, "What is Social...," p.328; *Realism*, pp.4-5.

[69] D. Levy, "What is Social...," p.328; *Realism*, p.5.

> an essential difference in the structure of the thought objects or mental constructs formed by the social sciences and those formed by the natural sciences. It is up to the natural scientist and to him alone to define, in accordance with the procedural rules of his science, his observational field, and to determine the facts, data and events within it which are relevant for his problem or scientific purpose at hand. Neither are those facts and events preselected, nor is the observational field pre-interpreted. The world of nature, as explored by the natural scientist, does not 'mean' anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist--social reality--has a specific meaning and relevant structure for the human beings living, acting and thinking within it. By a series of commonsense constructs they have preselected and preinterpreted this world which they experience as the reality of their daily lives.[70]

To adopt the terminology of Max Scheler, political positivism, which assumes that methods suited to the study of natural sciences are amenable to the political inquiry, is, thus, ontologically an illusion and epistemologically an error.[71] In a word, the positivistic science of man may be an illusion and/or an error. From this point of view, Voegelin argues that to make method the criterion of science destroys the true constitution of science, because method cannot be a criterion of science. However, by subordinating theoretical relevance to method, positivism perverts the meaning of science. In principle, thus, positivism is the destruction or perversion of science.

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[70] A. Schutz, *Collected Papers*, vol.1, pp.58-59.

[71] Max Scheler uses the terms illusion and error solely in determining two types of falsehood in cognition: illusion always has its proper sphere in immediate cognition; error, in indirect or mediated cognition, especially in inferences. See Max Scheler, *Selected Philosophical Essays* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1973), trans. by David R. Lachterman, p.12.

According to Voegelin, positivism incurs "the destruction of science" by making two fundamental assumptions. First, the success of the natural sciences gave rise to the belief "that the methods used in the mathematizing sciences of the external world were possessed of some inherent virtue and that all other sciences would achieve comparable success if they followed the example and accepted these methods as their model. This belief by itself was a harmless idiosyncrasy that would have died out when the enthusiastic admirers of the model method set to work in their own science and it did not achieve the expected successes. It became dangerous because it combined with the second assumption that methods of the natural sciences were a criterion for theoretical relevance in general."[72] The effect of the second assumption is to reverse the proper relationship of method and scientific relevance.

The "mathematical sedimentation of science"[73] since Galileo is "cast upon the life-world so as to conceal it to the point of being substituted for it. What in truth is a method and the result of that method comes to be taken for reality."[74] It is worth noting here Jacob Klein's contention: Klein discovers the difference between the

[72] *NSP*, p.4.

[73] H.Y. Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding*, p.64.

[74] Aron Gurwitsch, "Comment on the Paper by H. Marcuse," in *Boston Studies in the Philosophy of Science*, vol.2, ed. by Robert S. Cohen and Marx W. Wartofsky (New York: Humanities Press, 1965), p.300.

ancient and the modern conception of mathematics. He contends that the ancients intended to solve the problem of (mathematical) method on the basis of an ontology of (mathematical) objects. On the contrary, however, the moderns since the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries turned their attention first and last to method as such. Klein argues that in modern science the "generality of the method" (methodology) replaced the "generality of the object" (ontology): modern mathematics determines its objects by reflecting on the way in which mathematical objects become accessible only through a general method.[75]

Voegelin observes that "the subordination of theoretical relevance to method perverts the meaning of science on principle."[76] Attempting the "restoration of political science" through "retheoretization" at "the point where the principles of politics meet with the principles of philosophy of history," Voegelin protests the positivistic subjection of theoretical relevance to method. Because science is a search for truth concerning the nature of the various realms of being, for Voegelin "relevant in science is whatever contributes to the success of the search. Facts are relevant insofar as their knowledge contributes to the study of essence, while methods are adequate insofar as they can be effectively used as a means for this end." Voegelin

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[75] Jacob Klein, *Greek Mathematical Thought and the Origin of Algebra*, trans. by Eva Brann (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1968), p.123.

[76] *NSP*, p.6.

continues, "if the adequacy of a method is not measured by its usefulness to the purpose of science, if on the contrary the use of a method is made the criterion of science, then the meaning of science as a truthful account of the structure of reality, as the theoretical orientation of man in his world, and as the great instrument for man's understanding of his own position in the universe is lost."[77] In correctly fathoming what Voegelin exactly implies with theoretical relevance, it is worthwhile to bring up Schutz's theory of relevance. Schutz, Voegelin's friend with whom he spoke of a life-long dialogue, worked on the foundations for a sociological theory of relevance. Among other points, Schutz explained to Voegelin his triple scheme of subjective relevance:

> (1) anything which is found problematic and becomes a theme of deliberate attention within an "unstructurized field of unproblematic familiarity," gains *topical relevance*. It may be imposed from the outside or it may be intrinsic to a person's intentions. (2) If the topically "experienced segment of the world" is given a meaning according to a person's pre-established knowledge, it gains *interpretative relevance*. (3) If established topical and interpretational relevances lead to action, they become *motivational relevances*. A decision on "how to act" depends first of all on the interpretation of the "object" of topical relevance. However, for action to occur, the interpretation must be combined with a more or less definite idea as to what is to be achieved; "that which has to be done is motivated by that for which it is to be done." This is "in-order-to motivation." It is different from "the motivation for the establishment of the...project itself": Why is the objective of the action important to me? This is the "because of motive." According to the initial topical relevance, the motives for acting

[77] Ibid., pp.4-5.

are imposed or intrinsic.[78]

It seems clear from this explication of relevance that the problem of relevance is breaking up into two problems grounded in different levels of reasoning: theory taken in a narrower technical sense of social-scientific investigation and interpretation, and theory in the philosophical sense. Theoretical relevance in a narrower technical sense contains the conceptual and analytical tools dealing with a concrete subject-matter. Schutz's triple scheme falls in this category. But, as Schutz indicates, "since the scheme affects other segments of the investigation, the problem becomes a problem complex and gains a theoretical function of its own: it serves as a larger framework within which the interpretation of concrete findings occurs, not merely as facts-in-larger-context but as facts interpreted by the meaning embodied in the theoretical framework."[79] In a word, conceptual tools for the analysis of relevance in concrete cases are subordinated to a broader frame of relevance. Schutz only wanted to develop a "universal theory of relevance which can be applied to all different concrete relevance systems," including all ethical

[78] Richard M. Zaner, *Alfred Schutz: Reflections on the Problem of Relevance* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1970), pp.26-28, 36-37, 46-47, 50-51. Cited in Helmut Wagner, "Agreement in Discord: Alfred Schutz and Eric Voegelin," P.J. Opitz and G. Sebba, *The Philosophy of Order: Essays on History, Consciousness and Politics*, pp.81-82.

[79] H. Wagner, "Agreement in Discord," p.84.

systems.[80] Confirming this, Schutz listed further themes of his relevance theory, "the problem of so-called preferential action" and a "general theory of the motivation of human action": "the fully executed theory of relevance is nothing else but a phenomenology of motivation."[81]

Voegelin understands and accepts Schutz's general theory of relevance. However, he does not dwell on the first and second categories but deals extensively with the third, motivational relevance.[82] Schutz's motivational relevance, for Voegelin, means answering the question, "through what kind of experiences will men be motivated to ask "theoretical questions?" In answering this question, Voegelin aimed at separating the technical-social scientific discussion of relevances from the philosophical problem of relevance. Voegelin's usage of the term "theory" is, in the Greek sense--"explication of experiences of the transcendent in language symbols, illustrated by Heraclitus' triad of Love, Hope, and Belief, and Plato's Eros, Thanatos, and Dike"[83]--implants exactly what Voegelin means with "theoretical relevance." He aimed at separating the technical-social scientific discussion of relevances from the philosophical problem of relevance. As we have already

[80] Schutz's letter to Voegelin on Oct. 19, 1952. Cited in H. Wagner, *Alfred Schutz: An Intellectual Biography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983), p.196.

[81] Schutz's letter to Voegelin on November 1952. Cited in H. Wagner, *Alfred Schutz*, p. 196.

[82] H. Wagner, "Agreement in Discord," p.82.

[83] Ibid.

seen, theory in the Voegelinian sense is an attempt to formulate the knowledge of the essence of man in words with constant reference to the transcendental experiences. A science of man and society exists insofar as this theory has been developed. Theoretically relevant is, therefore, what can be related to a theory of the essence of man in this sense. Voegelin aimed at such "a theory which would be tied to a philosophical anthropology which, in turn, would express ultimate metaphysical orientations," while Schutz aimed at "a theory of relevance which, in the end, would be identical with a phenomenology of motivation."[84] In this sense, while Schutz, a sociologist, is said to build up his explorations of the problem of relevance from the level of substantive investigations, Voegelin, a philosopher of history, started on the philosophical level.[85]

Because positivism is the perversion of science, true science is ruined when inquirers who engaged in the study of man, society and history addict to positivism. The procedures and immanent logic of a science ought to be a function of the nature of the reality which it studies. And a defective, or a perverted conception of political reality gives rise to a defective or perverted political science. Positivism does not provide political inquiry with an adequate notion of reality. "Without the intellectual tools available only through true science, moreover, one could not

[84] Ibid., p.84.

[85] Ibid.

expose the unfounded claims of pseudo-science whether they are the claims of positivism, Nazis or Marxists."[86] Voegelin considers the ostensible victory of positivism in the contemporary social sciences "a Pyrrhic victory."[87] Pointing up the negative aspects of a purely positivistic approach, he declares:

> if positivism should be construed in a strict sense as meaning the development of social science through the use of mathematizing methods, one might arrive at the conclusion that positivism has never existed; if, however, it is understood as the intention of making the social sciences "scientific" through the use of methods which as closely as possible resemble the methods employed in sciences of the external world, then the results of this intention (though not intended) will be rather variegated.[88]

Because positivism is not true science, Voegelin argues, it is full of internal contradictions. Its inconsistencies are inherent in its very nature as an historical phenomenon. Consequently, when the nature of positivism is understood critically as the principled perversion of science, the historical manifestations of positivism can be seen to unfold with a necessary dialectical movement toward the end of positivism, which is at once a new beginning for true science.

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[86] Mary Ann Pauken Diebel, "On Eagle's Wings: Eric Voegelin's Onto-Theological Conception of History in 'The New Science of Politics'," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin, 1986), p.78.

[87] Hans Aufricht, "A Restatement of Political Theory: A Note on Voegelin's The New Science of Politics," in S. McKnight, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Search for Order in History*, p.58.

[88] *NSP*, pp.7-8.

Voegelin phenomenologically presents the dialectical movement of positivism that is historically necessitated by its very nature. With regard to the historical emergence of positivism, he identifies three manifestations:[89] (1) Science has been destroyed by the first manifestation of positivism which accumulates theoretically undigested, and perhaps undigestible, facts, that is, irrelevant facts. (2) Science has been perverted by the second manifestation of positivism, that is, by the operation on relevant materials under defective theoretical principles. (3) Positivism's third manifestation is the development of methodology, especially in the half-century from 1870 to 1920. That is, the historical manifestations of positivism "range from the factfinders to the relativists to the methodologists."[90] As moments of analysis, these historical manifestations are not simply accidental temporal points in the historical process called positivism. Rather the historical manifestations are essential moments of Voegelin's phenomenological analysis of positivism because they unfold necessarily and universally from the nature of positivism as the principled perversion of science.[91] Because of its internal contradictions, positivism created a whole host of problems for the historical and social sciences.

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[89] Ibid., pp.8-10.

[90] M.A.P. Diebel, "On Eagle's Wings...," p.78.

[91] Ibid., p.79.

Through his challenge of the logical and methodological assumptions of positivism, Voegelin forces its adherents and advocates to re-evaluate the premises of their doctrine. He presents a criticism of positivism focusing on the epistemological milieu in which positivist theoretical dogma operates. More precisely, assessing the validity of the fact-value dichotomy, and the notion of value freedom in research, he boldly declares that the value-free social theory is valueless. Voegelin discusses the legacy of Max Weber, for the fact-value dichotomy is closely related to the work of Max Weber. The manifestations of positivistic destructiveness, and the fundamental controversiality one finds among the political positivists is a consequence of a much larger problem in contemporary political science, namely, the separation of facts and values. That is, positivism historically has spawned the widely accepted fact-value dichotomy, and the dichotomy is structurally important to a complete understanding of the positivistic conceptualizations of political reality. Consequently, political science tends to move in either of two directions. Either positivism collects and studies so-called "subjective" values held by the populace and influencing it; or it becomes a kind of quantitative methodology, a means of research which might assist other fields by supplying behavioral regularities, ideal types, models, etc. My argument in this section, following the framework of Voegelin, suggests that the problems of positivistic

conceptualization are heavily dependent on the theme of value freedom and that it is informative to look more closely at the Weberian notion of science underlying these problems.

In political science of the twentieth century, the fact-value dichotomy or value freedom gained ascendancy. The positivistic paradigm in political science clearly partakes of this strict division between facts and values: the fact-value dichotomy is a central facet of positivist political inquiry. Political positivists have developed their thoughts in a so-called "value-neutral" fashion. The so-called scientific basis of positivistic epistemology which I have outlined in the former chapter allows its adherents to view the facts with a so-called objective and ethically neutral attitude. In many ways, the contemporary situation in which behavioral political inquiry finds itself is a product of the positivistic separation of objective facts from subjective values. Propositions about facts are related to the phenomena of the world, while propositions about values are discussed in normative argument about preferences. Facts are henceforth scientific and values increasingly reduced to personal preferences beyond verification. For positivism, a fact is something observed with the senses, whereas a value is something intrinsically desirable, good, worthy, or estimable by the internal, subjective, moral, ethical, or aesthetic standards of the person doing the valuing. Consensus is achievable in the

realm of facts, but much more difficult, if not impossible to ever achieve in the world of values. Positivists firmly believe that the scientific study of politics is possible by virtue of the researcher's ability to manage and subordinate human emotions and values in the interest of an objective assessment of behavior. But, obviously the political inquirer has many personal values. If these ever conflict with his science, he ought first to try to abandon his research altogether. But, positivism does not think the latter likely. Instead, "value-free inquiry" is assumed possible in most circumstances. Personal preferences, interests, and bias can, in other words, be held in abeyance.

I am not concerned at this point with the history of contemporary positivistic political science, but it is noteworthy that the loss of meaning and order is apparent in the labeling of all values as subjective, not experientially verifiable, as not scientific, etc. Eventually positivistic epistemology has consequently lost the ontological dimension of "science" which is, in its fullest sense, an onto-epistemic endeavor. Voegelin writes:

> Only when ontology as a science was lost, and when consequently ethics and politics could no longer be understood as sciences of the order in which human nature reaches its maximal actualization, was it possible to become suspect as a field of subjective, uncritical opinion.[92]

[92] *NSP*, p.12.

The very making of the claim that science *per se*, that is onto-epistemic science or general ontology, is illegitimate and unwarranted, and that it is merely the "field of subjective, uncritical opinion" shows the extent to which positivism is destroying science. By accepting the positivistic dogma in making this claim, the methodologists participate in that destruction. Voegelin goes on to say that

> When the *episteme* is ruined, men do not stop talking about politics; but they now must express themselves in the mode of *doxa*. The so-called value-judgments could become a serious concern for methodologists because, in philosophical language, they were *doxai*, uncritical opinions concerning the problem of order.[93]

"Uncritical opinion, private or public (doxa in the Platonic sense), cannot substitute for theory in science."[94] Therefore, while political science, along with the physical sciences, is filled with and based upon value judgments, these invariably wear the mask of "reality." And political positivists throw themselves into innumerable mental gyrations in order to maintain the fiction that they are not making or pursuing value judgments. However, the more astute practitioners of the social sciences faced the problems of value-judgments squarely and attempted to overcome them. Consequently, even in the heyday of positivism, there was implicit in it a "movement toward

[93] Ibid.

[94] Ibid., p.10.

retheoretization."[95] The roots of the problem of value judgments are generally traced back to the influential work of Max Weber, since for Weber political science must be value-free in order for it to be science.

Max Weber: Between the End and a New Beginning

Voegelin understood the greatness of those who devoted their lives to resisting what he later called "ideological swindles."[96] Among these scholars was Max Weber. Indeed, "Weber was of great importance for consolidating Voegelin's attitude toward science and sharpening his resistance to ideologies of all descriptions."[97] Voegelin had taken a step from his education in neo-Kantian methodology to Husserl's phenomenology, combining it with Weber's insight into the fruitfulness of ideological interpretation of the social sciences. However, although Voegelin had been an early adherent of Weber's theory of action, he later became critical of Weber's derailment in advocating value-free science. Voegelin shows that the work of Max Weber is significant because he is "a thinker between the end and a new beginning."[98] A brief look at Weber's views makes clear in what sense Voegelin designates Weber as a thinker between

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[95] Ibid., p.3.

[96] Barry Cooper, *The Political Theory of Eric Voegelin* (Lweiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1986), p.21.

[97] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.38.

[98] *NSP*, p.14.

the end and a new beginning, on the one hand, and identifies the Weberian derailment on the other.

It has been suggested that Weber had anticipated the end of ideology by having transcended Marxism, historicism, and utilitarianism.[99] As one of the founding fathers of sociology, and as the inspirer of much later empirical investigation in the Anglo-Saxon world, Weber produced discussions about the genesis and validity of ideas which contributed substantially to subsequent treatments of ideology. Weber very rarely mentioned the word "ideology". But his long and heavily qualified search for objectivity in politics places him uncertainly in the non-Marxist tradition moving from Destutt de Tracy to much current Anglo-Saxon political science.[100] Weber's thinking on social scientific concept formation is first elaborate in his criticism of meditation on philosophy of history.[101] Especially, in his criticism of philosophical historical thought regarding reality, Weber had a lasting influence on Voegelin. For Weber, the fundamental problem with formulating a philosophy of history is its confusion of the historical process with thought about the process, i.e., its confusion of "reality"

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[99] David McLellan, *Ideology: Concepts in Social Thought* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), p.35.

[100] Ibid.

[101] In recounting Weber's criticism of philosophical historical thought, I am indebted to J.T. Bergner and Anthony Giddens. See, Bergner, *The Origin of Formalism in Social Science* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp.99-100; and, A. Giddens, *Studies in Social and Political Theory* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), pp.189-207.

and "thought about reality".[102] Weber's criticism is that the practice of second-rate historical work attempts to compel reality to confirm to its concepts or its mental constructs.[103] Second-rate historians distort reality with their simplified concepts, and claim that they have not distorted reality. A far more thoughtful version of the confusion of thought and reality, or "ideological swindles" in Voegelin's terms, is offered when these concepts are then taken as the "true content" of history. Hegel serves as an example of this for Weber. Weber argues that Hegel abstracts from historical life certain concepts, which he then regards as the *real* history of which historical life is only the superficial manifestation. For Weber, the thoroughgoing Hegelian idealism represents a more thoughtful, but nevertheless mistaken, confusion of thought and reality. In this regard, Weber shares Marx's view of Hegel's philosophy.[104]

Yet Marx himself also commits the same mistake as Hegel in a slightly different form. Weber considered that Marx had made fundamental contributions to historical and sociological analysis. But, for Weber, "Marx merely hypostatizes as 'real' forces of historical change certain

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[102] See M. Weber, "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy," in *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1949), trans. and ed. by Edward A. Shils and Henry A. Finch, p.94.

[103] Ibid.

[104] See, Weber, "On Hegel's 'Concrete Universal,'" trans. by Sidney Hook, in Hook, *From Hegel to Marx* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), pp.312-315.

concepts such as 'class.'"[105] In other words, Marx endeavors to free himself from the Hegelian idealism implicit in all philosophy of history, but he succeeds only partially. The concept of "class," for example, is a very useful concept with which to investigate social reality. But it does not constitute a real component of real causal chain of any historical events. "Class" is a human idea, an abstraction which never corresponds at any stage of a historical event to the real and unique components of causal chain. All Marxian designations such as "the driving force of capitalism" are suitable only as abstractions with heuristic value, and do not constitute the real elements of an actual causal chain.[106]

To Weber, Marx's theories could not be regarded as anything more than sources of insight, or at most as ideal-typical concepts, which could be applied to illuminate particular, specific sequences of historical development. In Weber's conception, Marx's attribution of overall direction to movement of history was as illegitimate as the Hegelian philosophy of history which helped to give it birth.[107] While Weber admitted, with strong reservations, the use of "developmental stages" as a "heuristic means" which could facilitate the explanatory interpretation of historical materials, he rejected totally the construction

[105] J. Bergner, *The Origin of Formalism*..., p.99.

[106] M. Weber, "Critical Studies," in *The Methodology of the*..., p.188.

[107] See Weber's remarks on Marx's concepts in "Objectivity...," p.103 and *passim*.

of "deterministic schemes" based upon any sort of general theory of historical development.[108] The necessary corollary of this is the rejection of Marx's materialism as a key to the explanation of historical change. Weber was well aware that the undermining potential of the Marxist concept of ideology could be turned against the Marxists themselves. "The materialist conception of history", Weber wrote, "is not to be compared to a cab that one can enter or alight from at will, for once they enter it, even the revolutionaries themselves are not free to leave it."[109] According to Weber, the thesis that economic factors in any sense finally explain the course of history as a scientific theorem is "utterly finished".[110]

Indeed, Weber went so far as to reject the idea of an "absolutely *objective* scientific analysis of *social phenomena* independent of special and *one-sided* viewpoints according to which--expressly or tacitly, consciously or unconsciously--they are selected, analysed and organised for expository purposes."[111] From Weber's viewpoint reproaching Marx and Marxism, we can find that his overriding concern was to attack those who thought that political and ethical issues could be resolved by purely "scientific"--in this

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[108] See A. Giddens, *Studies in Social...*, p.192.

[109] M. Weber, "Politics and Belief," *Gesammelte Politische Schriften*(Munich), 1921, p.446. Cited in D. McLellan, *Ideology*, p.36.

[110] See A. Giddens, *Studies in Social...*, p.193.

[111] M. Weber, *The Methodology of...*, p.72.

case, more accurately, ideological, or to use Voegelin's term, gnostic--means. He wished to reject the legitimacy of a "scientific politics", and to dispel what he regarded as the illusory authority given to political and ethical ideals propounded in the name of "science." Weber was concerned to reject a view that a society should be ideally organized upon scientific principles, and that all social and political problems are open to a rational solution through the application of scientific knowledge. Weber argued that, because it was not possible to justify normative claims by scientific evidence and argument alone, the very idea of a scientific politics was epistemologically misconceived.

In this way, Weber's criticism of Marx and Marxism destroyed whatever pretension to science Marxists could conceivably claim. Weber's "study of the *Sociology of Religion* and *Economics and Society* buttressed his rejection of Marxism as scientifically untenable."[112] His analysis showed that Marx's writing was an untenable ideology. In Voegelin's sense, it is an ideology that has held "a mortgage upon science--that is, upon systematic thought."[113] Weber showed that the ideologue does not think of himself as a simplifier or a sloganizer; the ideologue believes that he is objective and scientific, even dispassionate. Weber, in this sense, taught Voegelin a more radical criticism than the implicit rejection of Marxism that the study of

[112] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.38.

[113] Russell Kirk, *Enemies of the Permanent Things* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1969), p. 158.

economics entailed.[114] The act of overcoming ideological commitment became a central focus of Voegelin's later analyses of ideological consciousness. The study of economics was equivalent to common sense insofar as it showed why no responsible economist could be a Marxist. In addition, Weber indicated the sources of the refusal by Marxists of responsibility and of common sense. In *Science and Politics*, Weber "clarified the point that the ideologies supply the values premised by action, but are not themselves scientific propositions. The matter became troublesome through Weber's distinction between the ethics of intention and the ethics of responsibility, the problem of taking responsibility for one's actions whatever one's intentions in acting may be."[115]

The ideological commitment of Marxists eclipsed their common sense and their sense of responsibility. Weber's distinction between the "ethics of intention" and the "ethics of responsibility" contained the genuine and permanent insight that the unforeseen consequences of moralistic action are the responsibility of the actor. This insight, which could be formulated in commonsensical terms as well, was important because it was developed in opposition to the ideological position that if one cherished certain values with great conviction, the sincerity with which they were held and the morally elevated intentions

[114] B. Cooper, *The Political Theory of Eric Voegelin*, p.21.

[115] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.38.

that one made public would be sufficient to excuse any suffering that might be caused by trying to put them into action.

Weber's distinction made it clear that the values that are assumed to be so morally elevating are scientifically invalid ideological inventions. He believed that a value-free social science was at least a legitimate aim. Whatever the particular values and prejudices of thinkers, their conclusions should be valid in terms which were in principle accessible to everyone. It was to protect his science from ideological infection that Weber developed his famous value-free method of inquiry devoted to the analysis of cause-and-effect relations in the process of society. Voegelin notes that Weber was

> on the side of the ethics of responsibility...so that if you, for instance, establish a government that expropriates the expropriators, you are responsible for the misery which you cause for the people expropriated. No excuse for the evil consequences of moralistic action could be found in the morality or nobility of your intentions. The moral end does not justify immorality of action...Ideologies are not science and ideals are no substitute for ethics.[116]

Voegelin firmly adopted these principles. He says that the immanent logic of the methodology movement ends in the person and work of Max Weber.[117] "In the work of Max Weber positivism had come to its end, and the lines on which the

[116] E. Voegelin, "Autobiographical Memoir," p.11. Cited in E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, pp.38-9.

[117] *NSP*, p.13.

restoration of political science would have to move become visible. The correlation between a constituent 'value' and a constituted 'value-free' science had broken down; the 'value-judgment' were back in science in the form of the 'legitimate beliefs' which created units of social order."[118]

However, Voegelin "later discovered the connection between Weber's views and the teachings of the neo-Kantian methodology of the historical sciences developed by the so-called Southwest German School of Heinrich Rickert and Wilhelm Windelband."[119] Indeed, Weber's approach to social sciences arose in the context of neo-Kantianism, or what he called the "historical school" which clearly arises from and has affinities to modern positivism while nevertheless altering its postulates somewhat.[120] Weber's

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[118] Ibid., p.22.

[119] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.39.

[120] Weber accepted Rickert's methodological distinction between the social sciences, specifically history and the natural sciences. He agreed with Rickert that the nature of historical knowledge was very different from the nature of natural scientific knowledge, but no less trustworthy because of that. Historical and humanistic knowledge is not to be contrasted with natural scientific knowledge as an anti-rational and anti-scientific form. To be sure, insofar as Weber argues for differences between the social and the natural sciences, he seems to differ from contemporary tendencies in mainstream social science in a variety of ways related to his interpretative, or *verstehende*, sociology. However this may be, and however much classificatory dispositions may be satisfied with such distinctions, the overriding fact remains that the mainstream of modern social scientific thought does not oppose, but elaborates upon, the fundamental problems established by Weber. It is doubtful that even today we could find a more comprehensive statement of the origin, the tendencies, and the limits of modern social science than is found in Weber's "Objectivity in Social Science and Social Policy." Furthermore, Weber's position is distinguished from Rickert's in the point that Weber efforts to reconcile the idealist tradition of sympathetic understanding of human action, *verstehen*, with the rigours of causal explanation on the model of the natural sciences. For Weber, therefore, historical knowledge is scientific knowledge even though it differs from natural scientific knowledge insofar as it is arrived at, and states in terms of, *verstehen*, and even though it gives knowledge of the unique and the individual rather than of the universal and the lawful.

epistemological thesis, which is made into a methodological premise, has been particularly important for political positivism, because his methodological writings represent one of the major expressions of the doctrine of value-freedom which constitutes a significant element of modern positivistic tradition. Hence, Weber has been regarded as "the greatest positivist" because the phenomenal process of positivism culminates in the work of Max Weber. Voegelin has penetrated to the core of the problem. As he writes:

> The notion of a value-judgment (*Werturteil*) is meaningless in itself; it gains its meaning from a situation in which it is opposed to judgments concerning facts (*Tatsachenurteile*). And this situation was created through the positivistic conceit that only propositions concerning facts of the phenomenal world were "objective," while judgments concerning the right order of soul and society were "subjective." Only propositions of the first type could be considered "scientific," while propositions of the second type expressed personal preferences and decisions, incapable of critical verification and therefore devoid of objective validity. This classification made sense only if the positivistic dogma was accepted on principle; and it could be accepted only by thinkers who did not master the classic and Christian science of man.[121]

But Weber's positivist position entailed "intellectual conflicts and contradictions."[122] Even Weber sometimes sounds ambivalent about his approach to the principle of value-freedom. Weber's conception of the place of values in social sciences involves several different claims, which are

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[121] *NSP*, p.11.

[122] Ibid., p.15.

partly independent of one another. This is often concealed by discussions which ascribe to him a single, general position of value freedom.

Let us turn to a brief explication of Weberian rationalism. To use the term coined by Weber, science is "wertfrei," value-free. In Weber's sense, the principle of the *Wertfreiheit*, value-freedom (literally, freedom from value, value-freeness, abstention from value judgments, or freely translated as "ethical neutrality")[123] of the social sciences means that a social scientist "brackets" his own evaluative preferences and sentiments when facing and analyzing his subject matter. Weber suggested as a general proposition that values are ultimately "demonic," not subject to rational determination. Therefore, facts are not determinative of values. In Voegelin's words, he recognized "the 'values'...as ordering ideas for political action, but he accorded them the status of 'demonic' decisions beyond rational argument. Science could grapple with the demonism of politics only by making politicians aware of the consequences of their actions and awakening in them the sense of responsibility."[124] "Demonic" decisions are purely arbitrary ones, choices made without reason. Therefore, he insisted that social science in order to be taken seriously as a "scientific" discipline, stands and falls with this principle.

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[123] See Arnold Brecht, *Political Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1959), p.227.

[124] *NSP*, pp.14-15.

This Weberian principle--if social science is to be science, then it must be value-free--in turn, "restricted social science to the exploration of causes and effects within social processes, leaving the underlying values out of account but for an acknowledgment of their use in selecting the materials. Value judgments were excluded from science, which meant that basic premises could not be critically examined, either in the realm of action or in the realm of science."[125] He took methodology as a value-free science to mean "the exploration of causes and effects, the construction of ideal types that would permit distinguishing regularities of institutions as well as deviations from them, and especially the construction of typical causal relations."[126] Thus, Weber was convinced that he had developed a purely empirical basis for discovery: his was a methodology independent of value judgments. According to him, value judgment, which he defined as "practical evaluations of the unsatisfactory or satisfactory character of phenomena subject to our influence", cannot be logically derived from factual statements.[127] Thus the social sciences, which are concerned with factual descriptions and explanations, cannot establish the truth or falsity of any value-judgment. Weber's claim that value judgments cannot be derived from the results of social sciences is based on a

[125] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.39.

[126] *NSP*, p.14.

[127] M. Weber, *The Methodology of...*, p.1.

particular epistemological view of the logical status of such judgments.[128]

However, it should be noted that when Weber claims that the social scientist should not make value judgments, this is itself a value judgment, and it cannot be supported solely by his epistemological view about such judgments. Weber was well aware of this. Thus he does not argue against making value judgments on the grounds that this stance is, for social scientists, required by the logical status of their inquiry. And, "in assessing the likely consequences, Weber distinguishes between the effects of social scientist making value judgments in their writing, and in their teaching in universities."[129] That is, besides keeping "unconditionally separate" the establishment of facts from the evaluation of them, the social scientist has to maintain a clear distinction between the academic life and the political life. It is with the latter that Weber is mainly concerned.

At this point we need to refer to the concept of value relevance, and the relationship between selecting objects of

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[128] In adopting this view, Weber was strongly influenced by both Kant and Nietzsche. Weber holds that there is no way of rationally and objectively deciding between competing, substantive ethical doctrines. In particular, specific value judgments about concrete phenomena cannot be justified by reference to factual inquiries. From such inquiries, all that can be discovered are the likely consequences of different courses of action, and thus the most effective means of achieving various ends. But the results of social scientific investigations do not enable one to make favourable or unfavourable judgments of the ends themselves. Nor does the fact that a particular course of action is the most efficient means to a favourably judged end mean that it should be performed; for one may also make a value-judgment about the means, that runs counter to the judgment of the end. See Russell Keat and John Urry, *Social Theory as Science*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1982), pp.196-9.

[129] R. Keat and J. Urry, *Social Theory as...*, p.197.

study and causally explaining them. For Weber, all knowledge of social reality is ideal-typical. One cannot criticize one ideal-type, say of capitalism, as less objectively "correct" than another. Relative to different values, one might wish to emphasize other features, such as capitalism's class structure, which are not so central to Weber's particular concerns. As a social being, a social scientist has his values, interests, and partisan concerns like anyone else. In fact, they guide him in the formulation of the problems he chooses to investigate. In this sense, the themes of his investigations are "value-relevant,"[130] as Weber had expressed it.

However, once the topic has been chosen, the social scientist is bound by the rules of procedure--which, by convention, have been accepted by his discipline--to gather and treat his data "objectively," that is, with no standard of relevance other than that built into his theoretical frame of reference. As a citizen of a community or society, he may well decide that he does not like the social conditions indicated by his data (or those of other social scientists), and he may wish to do something about these conditions. This is his privilege as a private citizen, but it is not his function as a social scientist. But Weber insisted that, once an object of a study has been selected and defined in relation to values, these have no further part in the investigation: neither they, nor any value-

[130] On Weber's doctrine of value-relevance, see ibid., pp.197-199.

judgments, should affect the objectivity of causal explanations. Everything else that is studied gains its significance not from values, but either from the fact that it is a causal determinant of the object of investigation, or because it provides evidence of such causal relations. Weber's position on these issues is explicitly and strongly expressed in the following passage:

> This imputation of causes is made with the goal of being, in principle, "objectively" valid as empirical truth absolutely in the same sense as any proposition at all of empirical knowledge. Only the adequacy of the data decides the question, which is wholly factual, and not a matter of principle, as to whether the causal analysis attains this goal to the degree which explanations do in the field of natural events. It is not the determination of the historical "causes" for a given "object" to be explained which is "subjective" in a certain sense...rather is it the delimitation of the historical "object," of the "individual" itself, for in this the relevant values are decisive.[131]

It is worth noting at this point that in his actual "doing" of social science, Weber did not stick to his distinction between facts and values. Weber's own practice, as contrasted with his methodological speculations, suggests that the gap between values and facts is crossed from the other direction as well. That is, not only are values heavily structured by facts, but facts are shaped by values. What then really went into Weber's thinking? Weber clearly "experienced in his historical and personal situation the struggle for freedom. His own political involvement in the

[131] M. Weber, *The Methodology of...*, p.159. Cited in Keat and Urry, *Social Theory as...*, p.199.

Weimar Republic is itself a clear demonstration that he was not value-free in the sense in which latter day positivists have misinterpreted it."[132] We can, thus,look at Weber from two sides: "First he wanted to defend the 'scientific' character of social science by confining it to 'fact,' and second, he wanted to defend the realm of 'human values' as outside the realm of science, as free from the critique of science."[133] Consequently, it can be said that Weber was as much interested in maintaining a realm of freedom (values) as in maintaining the sanctity of science (facts). Hence, the result of Weber's work was ambiguous. Even though his scientific enterprise was becoming truly objective, however, it was so at the cost of his conceptual consistency. Weber "attempted to reach methodological objectivity in the sense of interpretational relevance," but lacked "clarity about the problem of theoretical relevance." As Voegelin indicates, "thus far the work of Weber can be characterized as a successful attempt to disengage political science from the irrelevance of methodology and to restore it to theoretical order."[134]

However, the great defect with the Weberian method of analysis, as Voegelin points out later in *The New Science of Politics*, was that the criteria by which materials were

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[132] Theodore R. Malloch, *Beyond Reductionism: Ideology and the Science of Politics* (New York: Irvington Publishers, 1983), p.246.

[133] Ibid., pp.246-7.

[134] *NSP*, p.21.

accumulated for analysis as well as the reasons for an ethics of responsibility were themselves identified as 'value-judgments' and thereby outside the boundaries of scientific or rational analysis.[135] According to Voegelin,

> As the model case for his "ethics of intention" [Weber] used a not-too-well-defined Christian "other-worldly" morality; he never touched the problem whether the demonic values were not perhaps demonic precisely because they partook of his "ethics of intention" rather than of his "ethics of responsibility," because they had arrogated the quality of a divine command to a human velleity. A discussion of such questions would have been possible only on the level of a philosophical anthropology from which Weber shied away.[136]

But, the "objectivity" of Weber's science is what could be "derived only from the authentic principles of order as they had been discovered and elaborated in the history of mankind."[137] However, for Weber there existed no ultimate universal order which gives meaning to human life. In the absence of the deities, modern man can establish his own values which give dignity and meaning to the life of individual human beings. But since there is no ultimate universal order, there is no way to subject any values to a transcendental critique. Hence, for Weber all values are arguably equal. Consequently, Weber had "reduced the principle of a value-free science *ad absurdum*."[138]

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[135] B. Cooper, *The Political Theory of Eric Voegelin*, p.22. See, *NSP*, pp.13-22.

[136] *NSP*, p.17.

[137] Ibid., pp.17-18.

[138] Ibid., p.20.

In the Voegelinian sense, science, especially political science, is not the mere collection or typifying of so-called subjective value judgments, but "the elaboration of the problems of order deriving from a carefully nuanced analysis of the structure of human existence."[139] But the positivism which dominated Weber's conception of science denied "the existence of a science of order": by virtue of the positivist criterion of method the object of such a science did not exist, and, therefore, the science itself was illegitimate and did not exist. With the assumptions underlying "objective tyranny,"[140] moreover, positivism makes metaphysics taboo, by prohibiting the questioning of existence that transcends time and space, and so, is not completely amenable to the methods of sciences solely concerned with phenomena in time and space. As a consequence, Weber could not admit "the existence of a science of order" and not render such a science. Even though he studied on sociology of religion, therefore, it "could not induce Weber to take the decisive step toward a science of order."[141] Voegelin writes,

> One can hardly engage in a serious study of medieval Christianity without discovering among its "values" the belief in a rational science of human and social order

[139] William M. Thompson, "Voegelin and the Religious Scholar: An Introduction," in John Kirby and W. M. Thompson, eds., *Voegelin and the Theologian: Ten Studies in Interpretation* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), pp.11-12.

[140] Ronald E. Puhek, *The Metaphysical Imperative: A Critique of the Modern Approach to Science* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), p.12.

[141] *NSP*, p.19.

> and especially of natural law...In order to degrade the politics of Plato, Aristotle, or St. Thomas to the rank of "values" among others, a conscientious scholar would first have to show that their claim to be science was unfounded. And that attempt is self-defeating.[142]

Given the nature of positivism as a perversion of science in its subordination of the proper object of method, Weber took positivistic social science as far as they could go "on the road toward essence." But, for whatever reason, perhaps for an ultimately "impenetrable" one, he would never use the light of theory, gained from an understanding of the Classical-Christian science of man's existence in society and history, to recognize that it was the nature of positivism that caused the problems he attempted to resolve as best he could. Weber's "temporary resolutions pointed the way to a restoration of science *per se* yet his own attempts at reform would remain arbitrary and *ad hoc* because he religiously obeyed the positivistic taboo on metaphysics."[143]

When science is as thoroughly ruined as it was around 1900, the mere recovery of theoretical craftsmanship is a considerable task, to say nothing of the amounts of materials that must be reworked in order to reconstruct the order of relevance in facts and problems. Weber's period was the time when the "understanding of ontology as well as the craftsmanship of metaphysical speculation had to be

[142] Ibid., p.20.

[143] M.A.P. Diebel, "On Eagle's Wings...," p.99.

regained, and especially philosophical anthropology as a science had to be re-established."[144] However, he did not attempt to answer the ontological question which culminates in "the understanding of man as the thing which is capable of transcendental experiences"; that is, he did not pursue philosophical anthropology. Indeed, Weber's ideal types were theoretically not tenable because they have no ontological foundation. Weber's types of power and authority, e.g., are "grounded in nothing but a historical situation" created by the French Revolution and are inadequate for the interpretation of the manifold historical constellations with which Voegelin was concerned. Instead, "he had made his decision for entering into rational conflict with values through the mere fact of his enterprise."[145] In this sense, it can be said that, though Weber experienced reality, he was unable to account for it.[146] As Voegelin announces, he "knew what he wanted but somehow could not break through it. He saw the promised land, but was not permitted to enter it."[147]

According to Voegelin, the "nucleus of Max Weber's philosophy of history" is the idea that the historical relevance of our culture consists in its "rationalism," negatively determined by "disenchantment" and "daily life"

[144] *NSP*, p.25.

[145] Ibid., p.17.

[146] B. Cooper, *The Political Theory of Eric Voegelin*, p.22.

[147] *NSP*, p. 22.

and positively understood in terms of experimental science and responsibility.[148] Weber was convinced that "history moved toward a type of rationalism which relegated religion and metaphysics into the realm of the 'irrational.'"[149] In other words, Weber "conceived history as an increase of rationalism in the positivistic sense." From the position of a science of order, however, as Voegelin says, "the exclusion of the *scientia prima* from the realm of reason is not an increase but a decrease of rationalism. What Weber, in the wake of Comte, understood as modern rationalism would have to be reinterpreted as modern irrationalism."[150]

One of the most important aspects of Voegelin's philosophy of history is his description of modern Western civilization as the expression of the "gnostic" symbolic form. Gnosticism--in this case, specifically modern gnosticism--is a stream of thought which becomes progressively immanentized until it erupts in the totalitarian mass movements of our time. "Enormous and important differences exist between the various gnostic symbolisms that coexist in modernity, but they all have in common the fallacious attempt to transform the uncertainties and ambiguities of the experience of existence into the

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[148] E. Voegelin, "Ueber Max Weber," *Deutsche Vierteljahresschrift fuer Literaturwissenschaft und Geistesgeschichte*, 3 (1925), p.178. Cited in Juergen Gebhardt, "Toward the Process of Universal Mankind: The Formation of Voegelin's Philosophy of History," in E. Sandoz, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Thought*, p.71.

[149] *NSP*, p.22.

[150] Ibid., p.23.

certainties of one-dimensional intramundane experience. Out of their anxiety regarding the structure of existence, they create a 'second reality' which gives more assurance to them than the apprehension of the ground of being by faith and analogical reasoning affords."[151]

Voegelin shows the gnostic implications of modern rationalism by indicating a relationship between the development of attempts at value-free inquiry and the rise of modern totalitarianism. He is convinced that it was more than historical coincidence that the apparent value-free characteristics of Weberian-type social science coincided in the 1920s and 1930s with the rise of German National Socialism. More details of this theme will be examined in next section and Chapter Four.

[151] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's Contribution to Contemporary Political Theory," *Review of Politics*, 26:3 (July 1964), p.397.

3. RELATIONS TO OTHER CRITIQUES

In the latter part of previous chapter, I have examined the presuppositions of positivistic epistemology underlying the intellectual premises of both scientism and Western liberalism.[152] The positivistic rationalism, as formulated by Descartes, Locke and their successors, has fostered a mechanistic view of the world. In opposition to the positivistic tradition there emerged scholars from various academic disciplines such as the philosophy of science, phenomenology and other fields. And the critiques of positivistic political science by Voegelin run parallel to and are no doubt closely related to new developments within these various disciplines. It is the relationships between Voegelin's criticism and some of the other criticisms that are the focus of investigation of this section. I have chosen to examine the works of four thinkers whose efforts I believe best exemplify recent currents contrary to scientism in many disciplines, and closely related to Voegelin's critique. In order to clarify the relations between critiques by Voegelin and other leading figures, I refer to the attacks on the positivist position launched by such writers as Michael Polanyi (philosophy of science), Bernard Lonergan (theology), and Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (phenomenology). Although some of the works of these

[152] Concerning the connection between positivistic epistemology and liberalism, I will explain in Chapter Four.

writers are not as yet widely recognized among political scientists, there are, nonetheless, compelling reasons to consider their arguments seriously.

First, one of my reasons for choosing these various authors is to view the many ways the scientific tradition has been attacked. An obvious but nonetheless essential point must be made right away: no single, unified approach has arisen in response to the failures of positivistic epistemology. I have selected these authors because there exist interesting and unique aspects to the research of each. On the other hand, the disparate analyses which are examined in this section do have a number of common elements. That is, there is a commonality in the variegated works.

A second reason for seriously considering their works is that their works provide an alternative to the rationalistic understanding of science which has come to dominate modern thought. This rationalistic interpretation has had the effect of challenging the very legitimacy of political philosophy itself. As a consequence, contemporary political philosophy lost much of its previous force and credibility. As James Wiser indicates, "as an attempt to reconstruct human and social order, political philosophy necessarily involves an act of creative imagination, and by its very nature the meaning of such an act is of the type that in part must be accepted rather than simply

observed."[153] This decision to accept certain arguments or to accredit certain experiences is necessarily a matter of personal judgment. Indeed classical political philosophy is based upon an acknowledgement of this fact.[154] Yet in the climate of opinion emanating from the scientific revolution of the seventeenth century the personal involvement of the knower within the act of cognition came to be seen as the root of subjectivity. The objective character of modern science was associated with its impersonal quality and such a quality, in turn, was to be secured through a rigorous application of the "scientific method". Accordingly there developed a growing reluctance to accept the scientific claims of those traditions of inquiry where such an application was inappropriate, e.g., theology, ethics and political philosophy.

Therefore, the common arguments of the variegated objections to the positivistic tradition seem to be that an entirely new canon of knowing, transcending the old dichotomy of empirical science and normative science and of facts and values, has to be developed. They call the categories of Descartes into question, though they have as yet produced no new epistemological canon that has been widely accepted as a substitute for the Cartesian dualiism

[153] J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," *The Political Science Reviewer*, 7 (1977), p.91.

[154] For example, Aristotle states that "Scientific knowledge is judgment about things that are universal and necessary, and the conclusions of demonstration, and all scientific knowledge follow from first principles (for scientific knowledge involves apprehension of a rational ground)." Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, Bk.VI, Ch.3. 1140b. Also, see J. Wiser, "Political Theory, Personal Knowledge, and Public Truth," *Journal of Politics*, 36:3 (August 1974), pp.661-674.

of mind and matter that still dominates modern thinking. It is scarcely possible in one section to give due treatment to the variegated and complex theory of knowledge of each thinker; but what follows is a brief rendering of some characteristics of their thought which suggests why it is to our purpose.

Michael Polanyi

In opposition to the positivistic philosophy of science, there has emerged today a new breed of philosophers of science: among them are Thomas Kuhn, Michael Polanyi, Norwood R. Hanson, Stephen Toulmin, and Paul Feyerabend. Despite their individual differences, they share something fundamental in that they are focusing on "doing science" as the basis of the philosophy of science, and concerned with transcending the Cartesian assumptions that underlie social and human sciences. While acknowledging the usefulness and originality of all the ways of the philosophers of science in criticizing scientism, I shall examine Michael Polanyi's theory of knowledge.

His writings have been acclaimed, especially in the philosophy of science, as a critical challenge to the epistemological presuppositions of positivism and a creative contribution to a redefinition of the nature of scientific inquiry.[155] Although in many ways Voegelin and Polanyi are

[155] For example, T.A. Spragens, Jr. uses Polanyi's philosophy as a springboard in the hopes of creating a post-behavioral science of politics in his work, *The Dilemma of Contemporary Political Theory: Toward a Post-Behavioral Science of Politics* (New York: Dunellen, 1973).

very different thinkers, Polanyi's critique resembles Voegelin's at least in three aspects: First, Polanyi's work provides an alternative to the positive rationalistic understanding of science. Second, in developing his understanding of the actual operations of science, Polanyi proceeds to an analysis of human consciousness. "This analysis, in turn, leads him to posit the principles of a specific ontology within which his view of human nature can be appropriately located."[156] Finally, in his conception of human consciousness, "this particular understanding of the order of reality quite naturally implies a reconsideration of the principles of political order."[157]

As articulated in his major work *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, Polanyi, a physical chemist who turned to cognitional questions for the purpose of establishing the foundations of science in a free society, challenges particularly the objective criterion of verifiability that has been the hallmark of positivism. He contends that positivistic tradition has fostered a mechanistic world view based on Galilean and Newtonian cosmologies, and a critical ideal of scientific knowledge assuming that scientific theory cannot go beyond the empirical and observational. Such a view assumes that knowledge is not complete until it becomes explicitly formulated, critically established and objectively verified.

[156] J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," pp.91-92.

[157] Ibid.

It also nurtured the effort to eliminate all personal and human appraisals from science. Like Voegelin, Polanyi observes that the positivistic position has thus led to a fundamental falsification of the nature of scientific inquiry and that this falsification is responsible for the intellectual crisis of the twentieth century.

Before getting into an examination of Polanyi's epistemological breakthrough, let us make a brief summary of what he sees to be the "nihilist" and totalitarian implications of the scientific rationalism.[158] This procedure is appropriate because his chief concern is "not with a proper understanding of scientific technique *per se* but rather with the larger cultural and intellectual impact of the critical interpretation of science upon modernity."[159] In Polanyi's analysis, modern thought in a wider sense was animated by a passion for "emancipation of the human mind from a mythological and magical interpretation of the universe"[160]--i.e., liberation from religious fanaticism and traditional spiritual authority. With this characterization of modern thought, although he does not mention it explicitly, he seems to follow Voegelin's equation of the Western liberal tradition with the positivistic tradition. His argument presumes the two are based on the same philosophical premises--that is, anti-

[158] See M. Polanyi and Harry Prosch, *Meaning* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), pp.3-21.

[159] J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," p.107.

[160] M. Polanyi and H. Prosch, *Meaning*, pp.5-6.

authoritarianism and philosophical skepticism.[161] Western liberalism, for example, as is based on scientific rationalism and formulated by Descartes and Locke, was a protest for demanding freedom from authority and freedom of thought as the best means of approximation to truth.

The doctrine of free thought, which is presuming anti-authoritarianism and philosophical doubt, reached its extreme position in the European continent in the eighteenth century by the philosophy of Enlightenment. As a skeptical reaction against the dogmatic forms of speculative philosophy, the liberalistic position seems to represent "a healthy return to common sense and experience." Ironically, however, the philosophical premises of liberalism and thus the positivistic tradition, although animated by a passion for liberation from religious dogmatism and authority, have actually contributed to the destruction of the meaning of intellectual freedom. As is often the case, anti-authoritarianism and skepticism soon generate their own form of orthodoxy. And in this particular instance, the orthodoxy of liberal and scientific rationalism became a cultural and intellectual force of unique authority. Indeed in Polanyi's analysis, modern science--or more accurately, the rationalistic interpretation of modern science--is "the most important single element contributing to the intellectual crisis of the age."[162] The philosophical

[161] Terry Hoy, "Michael Polanyi: The Moral Imperatives of a Free Society," *Thought*, 58:231 (December 1983), pp.393-405.

[162] J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," pp.93-94.

presuppositions underlying liberalism and the Enlightenment denied the possibility of transcendent or universal standards of morality.

Liberal rationalism thus replaced traditional "moral ideals by philosophically less vulnerable objectives."[163] The process of replacement is "not a mere pseudo-substitution but a 'real' substitution of human appetites and human passions for reason and the ideals of man."[164] Polanyi describes the process of replacement as a process of "moral inversion." He writes, "The morally inverted person has not merely performed a philosophic substitution of material purposes for moral aims; he is acting with the whole force of his homeless moral passions within a purely materialistic framework of purposes."[165] However, owing to the failures to discover universal standards of human behavior, Enlightenment rationalism gave birth to various substitutes. They were: the romantic cult of unrestrained nationalism, the Hegelian enthronement of reason immanent in history, and the Marxist view of history as the product of class conflict arising from the mode of production.[166] According to Polanyi, therefore, the revolutions in the twentieth century that have resulted in the emergence of totalitarianism were the realization of the false

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[163] M. Polanyi and H. Prosch, *Meaning*, p.14.

[164] Ibid.

[165] Ibid., p.18.

[166] Ibid., pp.12-14.

expectations raised by Enlightenment rationalism. This is where "the inconsistency of a liberalism based on philosophical doubt becomes apparent: freedom of thought is destroyed by the extension of doubt to the field of traditional ideals, which includes the basis for freedom of thought."[167] Thus, he suggests that:

> We need a theory of knowledge which shows up the fallacy of positivistic skepticism and supports the possibility of a knowledge of entities governed by higher principles. Positivistic skepticism is one of a number of fallacies that have had their origin in modern science. In the days when it controlled all knowledge, religious dogma was a source of many errors. Now that the scientific outlook exercises predominant control over all knowledge science has become the greatest single source of popular fallacies.[168]

An appreciation of Polanyi's epistemology also requires a brief mention of the Kantian theory of knowledge as backgrounds. The central achievement of Kant stems from a radical bifurcation of the universe between a scientific world of empirical laws and effects (*phenomena*)--the only possible object of knowledge--and a world as it "really" is (*noumena*)--what is not an object of intuition, or that which has no logical possibility of ever being known and is accessible only through the moral will. As creatures of desire, our actions belong to the world of empirical cause and effect and are completely determined. But Kant believed that there is a moral or "transcendental self," which is

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[167] Ibid., p.10.

[168] Ibid., p.24.

free and able to transcend the phenomenal world and bring us into contact with the real or noumenal world in which man becomes conscious of moral obligation and the conflict between what "is" and what "ought to be." It is in the consciousness of moral obligation that we experience our freedom as a recognition that the moral law is not something imposed from without, but from within. Moral behavior is action in conformity to the idea of law, in doing what reason prescribes as our duty as opposed to personal advantage or self-interest.

It is not the intent here to provide a full discussion of Kant's epistemological and ethical theories. Suffice it to say that he represents "one of the more influential efforts in Western thought to establish a basis for moral universals in terms that would seek to overcome the inadequacies of Hume's criticism."[169] However, although Kant criticizes the excesses of Humean empiricism, there is nonetheless an empirical and objectivist strain in his thought. The view that knowledge is possible only of phenomena given in sense experience is still too strongly influenced by empiricism.[170] Moreover, it is widely recognized that his theory perpetuates a central deficiency of Enlightenment rationalism: a radical dualism of mind and body that descends from Descartes through Hume.

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[169] T. Hoy, "Michael Polanyi," p.395.

[170] In this sense, a critic like Habermas claims that Kant assumes a normative concept of science, with physics taken as the model of legitimate "scientific knowledge." See Juergen Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1971), trans. by Jeremy L. Shapiro, pp.13-15.

This springs from Kant's central contention that moral universals are the product of what is given to the practical reason of an autonomous will in opposition to deterministic laws of cause and effect that govern the world of nature as understood by the theoretical reason of scientific inquiry. The fundamental inadequacy of Kantian perspective, as Marjorie Green points out, is the Cartesian image of a thinking mind over a dead nature, making impossible the understanding of man as historical, rooted in the world of living organisms.[171] "The conclusions of Kant were inevitable so long as the Newtonian concept of the nature of scientific inquiry was unquestioned. Contemporary developments in the philosophy of science, however, have challenged the Newtonian model. It is here that the writings of Polanyi are of significance as a corrective to the inadequacies of Kantian dualism."[172]

In rejecting the rationalistic ideal of strict objectivism, Polanyi develops a new conception of science which comprises a concept of personal knowing. He suggests a distinction between science--science as the search for truth concerning the nature of reality--and the rationalistic interpretation of science. This distinction reminds us of Voegelin's understanding of science as the search for truth and of positivism as the perversion of science. Polanyi is concerned about the rationalistic

[171] Marjorie Green, *The Knower and the Known* (New York: Basic Books, 1966), p.152.

[172] T. Hoy, "Michael Polanyi," p.395.

interpretation of science which regards the ideal of science as detached and impersonal knowledge. The rationalistic ideal of strict objectivism tends to misrepresent the nature of scientific method by exaggerating the precision and exactitude of its operations. The effect of the "critical ideal of knowledge"[173] is to reduce scientific procedure to a set of clearly specifiable and impersonal observations and calculations which can be objectively criticized step by step. But it also eliminates from science the element of originality which "conflicts sharply with the ideal of a completely formalized intelligence."[174]

On the contrary, for science as defined to be the search for truth concerning the nature of reality, uncertainty and vagueness is a vital and necessary part of it.[175] Hence far from representing a system of exact rules, procedures and inferences, Polanyi argues, really operative method in science more closely resembles a "loose system of intuitions" based on a tradition which is tacitly accepted and "transmitted from one generation to the other only through the medium of personal collaboration."[176] Thus, by

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[173] Polanyi designates the belief system of modern rationalistic science as a "critical philosophy". "The meaning of critical philosophy is most apparent in the ideals it sets forth--in particular the ideal of scientific detachment as a means of producing impersonal and therefore universal knowledge." See J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," p.94.

[174] M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), p.301.

[175] Uncertainty is an inherent characteristic of truth and reality which is an object of "science." See, Chapter Three, "1. Uncertainty and Knowledge."

[176] M. Polanyi, *The Logic of Liberty* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), pp.52, 57.

countering the objectivistic theories of science that have disregarded man's power of knowing, and by calling forth an enormous array of examples of personal acceptance and judgment in the very doing of science, Polanyi, like Voegelin, attempts to emancipate the conception of science from the scourge of positivism.

In the rationalistic interpretation of science, the opposite of science was traditionally regarded as opinion. However, Polanyi argues that, as any interpretation must, the rationalistic interpretation includes a belief system. And "it is the particulars of this specific belief system that Polanyi finds to be destructive."[177] For him such an ideal of exact science is mischievous because it is unattainable. There can be no wholly explicit and wholly impersonal, so-called objective knowledge. Scientific method, in his view, cannot be described as the application or verification of explicit rules and procedures, or an objective criterion of verification and testability. It is his central contention that scientific inquiry embodies a dimension of personal knowledge that transcends the distinction between objective and subjective, normative versus descriptive (or fact and value), and reason versus faith, and encompasses a tacit or subsidiary awareness analogous to a skill or connoisseurship.[178]

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[177] J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," p.94.

[178] See Thomas Langford and William Poteat, eds., *Intellect and Hope: Essays in the Thought of Michael Polanyi* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1968).

Basically, in this way, he develops a new conception of science which acknowledges "the active and legitimate participation of the knower within the act of cognition itself."[179] As I have already brought up briefly in the first section of this chapter, Polanyi's theory of personal knowledge is complementary to an understanding of Voegelin's theory of consciousness, which I will turn to in the next chapter. According to Polanyi, participation of the knower is an indispensable coefficient of all knowledge. Ultimately, all knowledge is utterly personal, and insight is an utterly personal achievement. The human mind is not an impersonal machine engaged in the manufacture of truth. And in Polanyi's scheme "involvement (or commitment) rather than critical detachment" becomes the ideal scientific attitude. His epistemology seeks to transcend by showing how all knowing, including scientific knowing, is rooted in a structure of commitment.

This leads to another area of Polanyi's epistemology: his understanding of the role of belief in human knowledge.[180] His epistemology "reflects an Augustinian approach to the faith-reason relationship in emphasizing the primacy of belief over understanding."[181] According to him, the order of knowing is not that we understand and then

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[179] Ibid., p.95.

[180] In accounting Polanyi's understanding of the role of belief in human knowledge, I indebted to Joseph Kroger, "Polanyi and Lonergan on Scientific Method," *Philosophy Today*, 21:1 (Spring 1977), pp.2-20.

[181] Joseph Kroger, "Polanyi and Lonergan...," p.8.

believe but rather that we believe in order that we may understand. All explicit acts of reasoning--intelligent understanding and rational judgment--are grounded in a tacit and, therefore, fiduciary framework. "This is the way of acquiring knowledge...*fides quaerens intellectum*, to believe in order to know."[182] Since all knowledge is what someone believes to be true, "to believe" and "to know" are simply two ways of describing the same cognitional activity; the former emphasizing the personal character of knowledge, the latter its universal intent. Such is the equivalence of belief and knowledge in Polanyi's cognitional theory. Ultimately Polanyi's theory demands that we deny the validity of an absolute distinction between truth and belief or in stronger terms, between science and faith. "For all truth is but the external pole of belief, and to destroy all belief would be to deny all truth."[183] He contends that science is a system of beliefs which must be upheld by commitment, for "science or scholarship can never be more than affirmation of the things we believe in."[184]

Yet, it should be emphasized here that personal involvement assumes a form of involvement which does not imply subjectivity. In other words, grounding knowledge in personal commitment does not necessarily mean subjectivism.

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[182] M. Polanyi, *Science, Faith and Society* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1946), p.15.

[183] M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, p.286.

[184] M. Polanyi, *The Logic of Liberty*, p.31.

Although Polanyi emphasizes the personal commitment in scientific inquiry, therefore, his concept of the "personal" is not a defense of a radical subjectivity; for he clearly distinguishes between the "personal" in us that actually enters into commitments and the "subjective" states in which we merely endure feelings.[185] The concept of the personal thus transcends the distinction between subjective and objective.[186] It is important to realize that the category of the personal is neither subjective nor objective, rather it transcends the distinction between objective and subjective. By having denied a rigid distinction between reason and faith, Polanyi is accused of replacing science with mysticism.[187] Yet, according to him, personal knowledge can and does claim a universal validity. The knower's claim to make contact with reality is a claim also to universality.

By regarding all knowledge as personal, that is, as neither entirely objective nor entirely subjective in the traditional usage of these terms, Polanyi maintains that the validation of scientific truth is therefore achieved by an admixture of both factual and valuational judgments. Polanyi writes:

For one thing, there are no mere facts in science.

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[185] M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge*, pp.299-301.

[186] Ibid., p.300.

[187] Imre Lakatos, "Falsification and the Methodology of Scientific Research Programmes," in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave(eds.), *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p.163. See J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," p.100.

> A scientific fact is one that has been accepted as such by scientific opinion, both on the grounds of the evidence in favour of it and because it appears sufficiently plausible in view of the current scientific conception of the nature of things. Besides, science is not a mere collection of facts, but a system of facts based on their scientific interpretation. It is this system that is endorsed by a scientific authority. And within this system this authority endorses a particular distribution of interest intrinsic to the system; a distribution of interest established by the delicate value-judgments exercised by scientific opinion in sifting and rewarding current contributions to science. Science *is what it is*, in virtue of the way in which scientific authority constantly eliminates, or else recognizes at various levels of merit, contributions offered to science. In accepting the authority of science, we accept the totality of all these value-judgments.[188]

Polanyi designates the foundation of human knowledge as the "tacit dimension." The tacit dimension constitutes the foundation or presupposition of all personal knowledge and it is the pervasive structure of all intelligent activity. Man has certain tacit powers which he shares in common with the animals. Our tacit powers organize our experience in order to gain intellectual control over it. What Polanyi calls "explicit knowledge" is actually tacit knowing that has become articulated, but yet we must recall his conviction that no knowledge can be wholly explicit. Our unarticulated and unformulated knowledge remains tacit. Hence we encounter Polanyi's famous saying: "we can know more than we can tell."[189] What his theory of tacit knowing

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[188] M. Polanyi, *Knowing and Being*, pp.65-66.

[189] M. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension* (Garden City, NY: Double Day & Co., 1966), p.4.

amounts to is the rejection of the delusory demand for wholly explicit and wholly impersonal knowledge.

Let us clarify this by considering the character of comprehension. It is the act of understanding, for Polanyi, which most clearly manifests the structures of tacit knowing since tacit knowing is the basic operator in the integration of particular parts into a coherent whole.

> We may say that when we comprehend a particular set of items as part of a whole, the focus of our attention is shifted from the hitherto uncomprehended particulars to the understanding of their joint meaning. This shift of attention does not make us lose sight of the particulars, since one can see a whole only by seeing its parts but it changes altogether the manner in which we are aware of the particulars. We become aware of them now in terms of the whole on which we have fixed our attention. I shall call this a subsidiary awareness of the particulars by a contrast to a focal awareness which fixes attention on the particulars in themselves, and not as parts of a whole.[190]

Consequently, within any act of comprehension, Polanyi argues, there is both a focal awareness and a subsidiary awareness. The object of focal awareness is that of which we may have explicit knowledge. However, we achieve this knowledge only by virtue of the clues provided by things of which we have subsidiary or tacit awareness. Operative in the structure of tacit knowing is an inherent "from-to" relation so that we attend "from" a first term of this tacit relation "to" a second term. This basic polarity is explained in terms borrowed from anatomy. The first term is

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[190] M. Polanyi, *The Study of Man* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp.29-30.

the "proximal term," and the second is the "distal term." We attend from the subsidiary to the focal, from the proximal to the distal, from clues to an object, or from component parts to a comprehensive whole. In each case, we integrate the former in the latter. The fact that knowledge has a tacit component means, among other things, that we know more than we can say. That is, we have knowledge of the proximal term of which we are not able to speak. Consequently, "given the logic of the subsidiary-focal structure, there can be no formally defined set of strict criteria by which to guide the act of cognition."[191] For example, methodological rules, as such, must be explicit; yet knowledge contains a tacit dimension. Thus personal skill rather than method reemerges as the vital element in man's effort to establish truth.

Closely connected with the notion of the tacit is what Polanyi calls "indwelling." By this term he is drawing our attention to the way in which man dwells in the subsidiary components of awareness. That is, he uses the term to describe the process by which man incorporates subsidiary terms as an extension of his own cognitive powers. Preeminently this means that we are embodied and that our experience always carries with it these roots. Ultimately the body functions as the instrument of all knowing and acting so that we have a subsidiary awareness of it in all that we do. As Polanyi notes, "our own body is the only

[191] J. Wiser, "Knowledge and Order," p.98.

thing in the world which we normally never experience as an object, but experience always in terms of the world to which we are attending from our body."[192] To dwell in something is to treat it subsidiarily, in the same way that we treat our bodies. An alternative expression for indwelling is "interiorization." Thus the integration of particulars by "indwelling" is a form of interiorization and appropriation. We understand by dwelling in things, not by looking at them. When we truly accept moral principles or scientific theories, for instance, we interiorize them. They function as proximal terms in our processes of understanding--we attend to other things from them. These *noetic* frameworks form part of our conceptual dwelling.

Bernard Lonergan

In the West, as we have witnessed in the preceding chapters, the premodern worldview based upon the Christian theology was fragmented after the Renaissance through the modern mind's preoccupation with the mastery of method in empirical and objective analysis. The metaphysical and theological world-views thus have been thrown into crisis by an inability to assimilate critically the import of modern scientific methods. The resulting triumphs of modern science over theology led to a pervasive secularism.[193]

[192] M. Polanyi, *The Tacit Dimension*, p.16.

[193] With regard to the triumph of perversive secularism, see Chapter Four of this dissertation which assesses Voegelin's account of gnosticism and modernity.

Consequently, as in other fields of human knowing, in contemporary political science the rationalistic ideal of knowledge of the scientistic tradition has been widely embraced. The positivist political science whose goal is to augment the empiricist-oriented, objective theory of knowledge through use of the scientific method regards the metaphysical or transcendental experience, e.g., religious belief, as unreliable because it pertains to value assertions, moral statements or the nonempirical claims of fact that cannot be validated through direct rationalistic empirical observation.

Dialectically, however, contemporary liberal and positivistic cultures are now experiencing crisis, the roots of which can often be traced to such secularism. For a theologian, therefore, it might be hoped that the foundation for a resurrected theology, one that is not based on the doctrine of value freedom, could be developed from a similar deeper mastery of method operative both in science and religion. Then, a renewed theology could offer many valid insights into the deficiencies of any secularist exclusion of the metaphysical questions and value judgment. It is to this context that Bernard Lonergan speaks. As a Catholic theologian who sought a foundation for method in theology, Lonergan argues that a contemporary theology is not possible without some retrieval of the subjectivity operative not only in religion but also in science. He thus comes out of the religious context of Christianity and out of the

scientific and secular consciousness of the modern world. And he discovers in himself and makes available a recovery of the subjectivity operative both in religious and our scientific consciousness.

It is obvious that there is a fundamental congruence between the work of Voegelin and of Lonergan.[194] However divergent their views may be on fundamental issues (such as their understanding of doctrine, for example), they share a common endeavor. They both share the basic approach for understanding human existence: God, man, history and society are not objects to be known from the "outside", they can only be known by participating in what constitutes their order; human order is achieved in the experiences of self-transcendence toward the order of divine being. For Voegelin this means recovering the constitutive experiences and symbols of human self-understanding that have emerged in history. Thus he approaches the foundational reality by studying the representative symbolizations of experiences of transcendent order as they emerge historically. For Lonergan this is achieved by fulfilling the transcendental precepts of authentic human existence. He addresses the basic reality by articulating a method that can be implemented in all concrete inquiries into human meaning.

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[194] On the congruence between the work of Voegelin and Lonergan, Eugene Webb and Michael P. Morrissey present comprehensive accounts. See, E. Webb, *Philosophers of Consciousness: Polanyi, Lonergan, Voegelin, Ricoeur, Girard, Kierkegaard* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1988), pp.93-121; M.P. Morrissey, "Consciousness and the Search for Transcendent Order: Eric Voegelin's Challenge to Theology," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of California, Berkeley, 1988), pp.370-398.

They both recognize the affinities in one another's thought.[195] There is a fundamental affinity between Voegelin's analysis of the structure and dynamics of consciousness and Lonergan's. Indeed, "no contemporary thinker has been more concerned with consciousness than these two giants."[196] Their theories of consciousness are basically compatible and complementary. Both Voegelin and Lonergan, with varying degrees of intensity and exactness, have been breaking away from the intellectual horizon reigning ever since the late Middle Ages, the hallmark of which has been the relativistic rationalist theory of truth. They both depart from the current ethos of relativism by taking their stand on the classical viewpoint which affirms the unity and universality of truth. Both Voegelin and Lonergan draw their basic insights from classical Greek philosophy, especially Plato.

Lonergan insists that contemporary philosophical culture retraces the journey in search of foundations along

[195] Each man read the other's work but only Lonergan discussed Voegelin's thought in print in two of his later essays: "Theology and Praxis," and "A Post-Hegelian Philosophy of Religion." See B. Lonergan, *A Third Collection*, ed. by Frederick E. Crowe, pp.188-96, 219-221. Here Lonergan appreciates Voegelin's essay "The Gospel and Culture." The only place where Voegelin mentioned Lonergan in print was when he borrowed Lonergan's technical term "scotosis" in his essay "What is Political Reality" to refer to the psycho-spiritual disease of blocking out reality. See Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.201. In a brief correspondence initiated by Voegelin in November 1967, Voegelin and Lonergan expressed an appreciation for the other's work. Their exchange of letters was accompanied by an exchange of recently published articles (for example, Lonergan's "The Dehellenization of Dogma" and Voegelin's "Immortality"). On this occasion Voegelin remarked to Lonergan: "though from very different positions, we are concerned with the same problem" (undated). And Lonergan replied: "I agree that our differences are compatible with a fundamental agreement on direction" (11/15/67). These letters are included in the Correspondence File of Eric Voegelin's Collected Papers, Box 20, Hoover Institution Library Archives, Stanford University. See M.P. Morrissey, "Consciousness and the Search for Transcendent Order," p.370n.

[196] M.P. Morrissey, "Consciousness and the Search for Transcendent Order," pp.12-13.

the path from medieval essentialism to Descartes' thinking substance, to Kant's transcendental ego, to Hegel's subject, to Kierkegaard's "this" subject: from object as object, to subject as object, to the subject as subject.[197] The venture of cultural reconstruction--to use Voegelin's term, the "restoration" or "retheoretization"-- must take the road of, in his unique phrase, "self-appropriation."[198] By this Lonergan means that epistemology, metaphysics, and all other branches of philosophy, including the philosophy of religion, must rest on an existential underpinning; they must be founded on an explication of the conscious activities of the self as knower.[199] Through a studied application of the Socratic injunction "know thyself," issuing in what Lonergan styles "cognitional theory," we can, he claims, fashion a basic philosophical semantics.

Truth, objectivity, and reality now assume meaning in terms of the norms ingredient in the very process of inquiry with its directional tendency. The knower, then, rather than being a self-contained *cogito* "in here" confronting a world "out there," is a self-transcending subject dwelling in the luminous openness through its recurrent cognitive structure of experiencing, understanding and judging. Fundamental differences in metaphysics, ethics, and

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[197] Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1972), p.316.

[198] B. Lonergan, *Insight: An Essay in Human Understanding* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p.xviii-xxiii, xxvii.

[199] Ibid., pp.xviii-xix, 319-339, 396-401, 602-604, 636-638.

epistemology can usually be reduced, explicitly or implicitly, to differences in cognitional theory, and those differences can be resolved, and only be resolved, by an appeal to the data of consciousness.[200] Such is Lonergan's tack. His focus on self-appropriation and the systematic expansion of the positions of cognitional theory into all domains of philosophy stands as his most original achievement and perhaps as an enduring legacy to the history of philosophy.

The Kantian turn to the subject set the problematic for modern philosophy as a shift from metaphysics to cognitional theory. However, even Kant's modest claims for critical cognitional theory have been "overthrown by the dominant currents of logical positivism, linguistic analysis, and Sartrean existentialism, each in its own right, among other imperatives, attempting to salvage some residue of philosophy from the ravages of historical consciousness."[201] As Wilhelm Dilthey clearly saw, that is, the objectivism of Kantian idealism was no match for the expanding success of the natural sciences, along with the positivism and empiricism that claimed to be their rightful philosophical exponents.[202] Dilthey, as is illustrated by Matthew Lamb,

[200] Ibid., pp.xi-xii, xxix, 387-388, 602-604, 623-630, 677-686.

[201] T.J. McPartland, "Historicity and Philosophy: The Existential Dimension," in Timothy P. Fallon, S.J. & Philip Boo Riley, eds., *Religion and Culture: Essays in Honor of Bernard Lonergan, S.J.* (Albany, NY: SUNY Press, 1987), p.107.

[202] See, Matthew Lamb, "W. Dilthey's Critique of Historical Reason and B. Lonergan's Meta-methodology," in P. McShane (ed.), *Language, Truth and Meaning* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), pp.115-166; M. Lamb, "The Exigencies of Meaning and Metascience: A Prolegomenon to the God-Question," in Thomas A. Dunne and Jean-Marc Laporte, eds., *Trinification of the World: A*

perceived how Kantianism, French positivism, and British empiricism were all too exclusively dependent upon mathematics and the natural sciences in articulating their respective cognitional theories. Nevertheless, Dilthey's own attempt to provide a cognitional theoretical grounding of cultural sciences, of *Geisteswisseschaften*, by separating those sciences from the operations of the natural sciences was doomed to failure.[203]

On the other hand, Lonergan "typifies the contemporary problematic in his move from cognitional theory to methodology."[204] For him this move could not be content with excluding certain fields of conscious human performance from others. He defines the contemporary problematic with reference to a "critical inclusivism."[205] Mindful of the Hegelian critique of Kantian cognitional theory,[206] Lonergan's cognitional theory has not been elaborated in "isolation from the actual performance of the sciences."[207] In this sense, Lonergan's use of the terms, "insights, understanding, is both more precise and has a broader range

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Festschrift in Honour of Frederick E. Crowe in Celebration of His 60th Birthday (Regis College Press, 1978), pp.15-45; and, M. Lamb, *History, Method and Theology: A Dialectical Comparison of Wilhelm Dilthey's Critique of Historical Reason and Bernard Lonergan's Meta-Methodology* (Missoula, Montana: Scholars Press, 1978).

[203] On the failure of Dilthey's attempt, see M. Lamb, *History, Method and Theology*, pp.236-241, 338-343.

[204] M. Lamb, "The Exigencies of Meaning," p.16.

[205] Ibid.

[206] See David Tracy, *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan* (New York: 1970), pp.91ff.

[207] M. Lamb, "The Exigencies of Meaning," p.16.

than the connotation and denotation of *Verstehen*. Insight occurs in all human knowledge, in mathematics, natural science, common sense, philosophy, human science, history, theology."[208] Therefore, in his monumental work, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, Lonergan begins his treatment of human cognition with an extended analysis of knowing in mathematics and the natural sciences. He chooses these disciplines because of the obvious clarity and success of their methods.[209] He also realizes that the analysis of cognition will not have credibility nor generality unless it is developed in terms of the sciences, the scientific methods.

In his analysis of the human person, the subject, Lonergan uncovers the conscious operations of knowing.[210] He equates three levels of consciousness--experiencing, understanding, and judging--in the structured process of knowing operations with scientific methods of gathering evidence or data, forming hypothesis, and verifying.[211] What modern science has writ large in its methods is indeed simply the pattern of cognition within the human subject who

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[208] B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, pp.212ff.

[209] B. Lonergan, *Insight*, pp.xxi-xxii.

[210] Besides knowing, he also discovers conscious operations of choosing or deciding. According to him, in our choosing, there are both the level of ethics and the ultimate horizon of religious existence.

[211] Indeed in his answer to the question "What do we do when we know?" he presents a theoretical analysis of knowing: human knowing is a self-structuring process of experiencing the data of sense and of consciousness; of attempting to understand and gain insight into the data and to formulate those insights; and of verifying or falsifying the correctness of our understanding on the basis of evidence. B. Lonergan, *Insight*, pp.3-25.

does science. Lonergan's emphasis remains very much upon the distinctively objective character of the scientific outlook. It seems that the idea of an impartial and objective scientific viewpoint underlies a number of important distinctions in Lonergan's cognitional theory. Moreover, he states that "all objectivity rests upon the unrestricted, detached, disinterested desire to know."[212] Therefore, one could get the impression that his cognitional theory implies a contrast between the objectivity of scientific knowledge and the subjectivity of all non-scientific knowledge. In short, Lonergan regards scientific knowing as typical of cognitional activity. That the study of the human understanding is the way to determine the fundamental nature of the reality revealed to that understanding is of course the starting-point of the classical British empiricists Locke, Berkeley, and Hume. In this sense, it can be said that Lonergan has not rejected but rather sought to appropriate the modern rationalistic ideal of scientific knowledge, and that he identifies knowledge with the content of explicit formulation and reflective criticism. His cognitional theory reflects the positivistic and rationalistic ideal of explicit, objective scientific knowledge.[213]

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[212] Ibid., p.383.

[213] In Lonergan we can find what seems to be a sharply conflicting view of the scientific enterprise. As he characterizes it, scientific inquiry is dominated by the spirit of detachment. "It limits itself to questions that can be settled through an appeal to observation and experiment. It draws its theoretical models from mathematics. It aims at an empirical knowledge in which value judgments have no constitutive role" (Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, p.248). The ideal of detached intellectual

With regard to the understanding of the ideals and methods of science, here we can discern that there is a disagreement between Voegelin's thought and Lonergan's. Whereas Voegelin rejects positivistic tradition because it is an existentially disordered orientation of the soul in that it attempts to reduce all reality to thingness--God, man, world and society become objects to be perceived by a skeptical observer--Lonergan criticizes it as an epistemological fallacy because it views knowing as something like looking. Moreover, Voegelin has a high regard for classical science, whose tenets he believes have been lost in the mathematicized and verifiable empiricism of modern science; in contrast, Lonergan gives to modern science very high marks, believing that on most all accounts it has superseded classical science.

However, it should be noted that Lonergan's methodical stress does not fall under the critique of a "methodological solipsism," because the metaphysical consequences of the method as pursued by Lonergan are not, to say the least of it, the same as those arrived at by the empiricists. Through an examination of Lonergan's foundational position of objectivity immanent within his cognitional theory we can

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inquiry, in short, sets scientific knowledge apart from other forms of human cognition, suggesting that in some sense it is both more objective and impersonal. Here we find the image of the scientist as a disinterested observer who relinquishes all personal concerns and allows "the detached and disinterested exigencies of inquiring intelligence....to enter and assume control" (Lonergan, *Insight*, p.73). According to Lonergan, moreover, one approximates the scientific ideal to the extent that his presuppositions, methods and categories of thought are critically examined and specified. In his view, "mathematicians, scientists and philosophers all operate on presuppositions that they can explicitly acknowledge" (Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, p.223), and therefore, these cognitive disciplines can be "critically" grounded.

fathom the true intention of his "methodical exigence." His articulation of method does not stop at "methodolatry"; "methodical exigence" raises questions which call forth another exigence, the "transcendental exigence." Indeed, "Lonergan's method is aimed at overcoming once and for all empiricist and idealist misunderstandings of the subject as confined within private mental acts."[214] He maintains that, as the cognitional pattern of the human person, method is not limited only to scientific knowing, it is common to human knowing in all fields. It is the "transcendental method" or "meta-method" which is shared by all the particular methods of the human and natural sciences, including theology. That is, Lonergan's treatment of the exigencies of method is dynamically oriented to the transcendental exigence. As the notion of being is dependent on the notion of the subject, so the notion of objectivity is dependent on both previous notions. We have to be careful in treating his conception of objectivity, for his notion of objectivity looks antithetical to the conventional notion. For him objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity.[215]

Then, what is the authenticity of subject? Each person, or subject, has his own body, own abilities, own psycho-social development, own opportunities, own personal history of good fortune and bad, risk and decision, success

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[214] Karl-Otto Apel, *Die Transformation der Philosophie*, II, pp.311ff.

[215] B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, p.265 and *passim*.

and failure. Because each person has his own life to lead, what authentic living might mean for any person can be determined only by that individual himself. But because every individual is at least a subject, and because the dynamism of our conscious subjectivity heads toward authentic subjectivity, we are led to ask if perhaps there might be some directives or imperatives, so to speak, built into our very being as subjects. And Lonergan believes that there are, indeed, such imperatives.[216] In order to speak any further of the authenticity of subject, we need refer to the existential consciousness.

According to Lonergan, the human person is more than experiential, intellectual, and reasonable, for the striving or eros momentum of our conscious life does not reach its summit in the attainment of truth. Living is far broader than mere knowing. Human existence is not simply an adventure of the mind, because our conscious living is also a "doing", an exercise of freedom, a self-commitment and creation. And so beyond the levels of experience, understanding, and reflection, our conscious subjectivity moves us to a higher realm where we deliberate about our goals and projects, evaluate them, make decisions, do this or that, work out the direction and meaning of our lives. This level of activity, as Lonergan sees it, constitutes the

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[216] Paul Schuchman, "Bernard Lonergan and the Question of Moral Value," *Philosophy Today*, 25:3 (Fall 1981), p.255.

human subject in his fullness, the human person, so to speak, in the full strength of his actualization.

It is, in fact, the highest level or manifestation of human subjectivity, the subject as existential, and it is on this level of the person, of the existential subject, that the question of moral value finally appears. The subject, therefore, in his concrete living is at once experiential, intellectual, reasonable, and existential. The restlessness of our conscious being moves us forward to higher and more human modes of actualization. And as we mount from level to level, the lower activities are not overcome and left behind but are preserved, raised up, and given a new significance as the basis for further operations of a subject that is aware of himself in a fuller mode of life. This movement in our conscious activity is a thrust toward self-transcendence in our being, and each successive level of our conscious operations manifests a higher, more complete, and more fulfilling mode of self-transcendent existence.[217]

Self-transcendence, therefore, is visible on different levels. As experiential we are carried beyond ourselves by the flow of perceptions, desires, memories, and anticipations. As intelligent we can transcend the infant's world of immediacy and move into the larger world mediated by the constructs of meaning in all its different modalities. As reasonable we are enabled to transcend mere

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[217] B. Lonergan, "Religious Knowledge," *Lonergan Workshop*, 1 (1978), pp.311-314; Paul Schuchman, "Bernard Lonergan...," Lonergan Workshop, pp.252-261.

meaning to true meaning which mediates a world as it really is. And as existential we can move beyond cognitive self-transcendence, to an objective living characterized by self-direction, self-mastery, self-domination, and self-sacrifice. This dynamism toward self-transcendence constitutes the essential inner reality of human living. But the thrust itself is one thing; its actual realization is another. The achievement of self-transcendence is what is meant by authenticity.[218] Lonergan says, "a man is his true self, inasmuch as he is self-transcending."[219] The dynamic structure of consciousness--that conscious subject is at once, experiential, intellectual, reasonable, and existential--suggests that corresponding to each of these levels or dimensions of consciousness, there is to be found a particular exigency for the authentic, a particular manifestation or articulation of the radical eros of consciousness toward self-transcendence.

For the subject as experiential authenticity means: Be "attentive." For the subject as intellectual authenticity means: Be "intelligent." For the subject as reasonable authenticity means: Be "reflective." Finally, for the subject as existential authenticity means: Be "responsible." These transcendental precepts are the imperatives built into the dynamic structure of the human subject, and the fulfillment of these precepts constitutes, in part at least,

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[218] B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, p.104.

[219] Ibid., p.357.

the meaning of human authenticity, of self-transcendence, of objective existence, of a genuinely human life. Self-transcendence is radically and fully the fundamental driving impulse of man's being, and the fulfillment of its abiding imperatives is the creative side of an authentically human existence. Objectivity, then, as self-transcendence, has its source in authentic subjectivity, and this includes the objectivity of our responsible evaluation and decision. As intelligent consciousness is the transcendental notion of the intelligible, as rational consciousness is the transcendental notion of the true and the real, so existential consciousness is the transcendental notion of value.[220]

Method in Theology explicitly acknowledges this more radical existential foundation. In it the basic position on the subject, in which the basic positions on being and objectivity are rooted, is expanded to include not only the position on knowing, but also the position on existential consciousness, on moral and religious conversion. The operations of existential consciousness initiate and sustain, but also follow upon and sublate, those of cognitional consciousness. "The existential intention of value needs and so sublates the knowledge of reality that has been attained by the exercise of intelligence and

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[220] M. Lamb designates experiential, intelligent and reflective transcendence as "cognitive self-transcendence"; existential transcendence, "moral self-transcendence." See M. Lamb, "The Exigencies of Meaning," p.35.

rationality."[221] Because of this sublation, existential consciousness is a fuller and richer condition than knowing consciousness.

Concomitant with this development is the explicit acknowledgement that theology is no longer founded in cognitional analysis alone, but in an intentionality analysis that objectifies moral and religious consciousness as well. And such an objectification is referred to, not as the basis or foundation of theology, but as theological foundations.[222] The new notion of existential consciousness means that the specialty of foundations includes an objectification of moral and religious conversion as well as an intellectual self-mediation. Cognitional analysis "stressing methodological exigence" becomes only one component in theology's foundational functional specialty. A marvellous shift has occurred: Lonergan moves from speaking of the cognitional foundations of theology to discussing the theological foundations of, among other things, interdisciplinary collaboration; and, in this way his methodical exigence transforms to transcendental exigence. The development in Lonergan's thought is quite momentous. And, transcendence is, for Lonergan, not some "absolute knowledge," "transcendental ego," or "a priori innate forms." It is struggle and search; it is as concrete

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[221] Robert M. Doran, *Psychic Conversion and Theological Foundations: Toward a Reorientation of the Human Sciences* (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1981), p.62.

[222] B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, p.365.

as the vast efforts of human beings slowly and painfully to discover, and resolutely to overcome the setbacks endured throughout history.[223]

In clarifying the relations among cognitional theory, methodology and method in Lonergan's thought, an account of Lonergan's thought on the nature of philosophy which is presented by Thomas McPartland is worth noting.[224] According to Lonergan, philosophy has an existential aspect and a systematic aspect; both are intrinsically related to each other as subjective and objective poles of the horizon of philosophy. Lonergan, more than any other contemporary philosopher, emphasizes both the existential and the systematic character of philosophy; to ignore either would be to distort philosophy, heading for either subjectivism or objectivism.[225] This dual characterization of philosophy by Lonergan presents a sharp contrast of Lonergan to Voegelin who stresses solely the existential dimension of philosophical inquiry. By keeping in this full perspective in his philosophy both the subjective pole of self-appropriation and the objective pole of cognitional theory, Lonergan strives to avoid the twin dangers of either subjectivism, irrationalism, and romanticism, on the one

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[223] M. Lamb, "The Exigencies of Meaning," p.35. Also see Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, pp.27-55; Lamb, *History, Method and Theology*, pp.475-481.

[224] In articulating Lonergan's thought on the nature of philosophy, I am indebted to Thomas J. McPartland, "Historicity and Philosophy: The Existential Dimension," Timothy P. Fallon, S.J. and Philip Boo Riley, eds., *Religion and Culture*, pp.107-122.

[225] T.J. McPartland, "Historicity and Philosophy," p.111.

hand, or objectivism, essentialism, and conceptualism, on the other hand. For Lonergan the existential aspect is the experience of the philosopher as a lover of the wisdom, an incarnation of the desire to know with its structure of experiencing, understanding, and judging.

But because philosophy is a search for complete intelligibility, the systematic imperative emerges. The systems, expositions, treatises, arise ever anew to do homage to the desire to know. The subjective pole therefore specifies the objective pole. Lonergan's philosophical perspective includes more than the systematic positions derived from cognitional theory. Yet Lonergan, "for all the wealth of his existential analysis, tends to accord the systematic dimension of philosophy more treatment."[226] And "when he makes his most penetrating statements about existential issues, he addresses them more to the topic of human living in general, and of religious and cultural communities in particular, than to the topic of philosophy per se."[227] Lonergan thinks that the philosopher does not look at an objective pole of essences, of systems, of being; the philosopher is immediately related to being in the philosopher's questioning unrest.

However, we must not confuse the existential aspect--the philosopher as subject, the concrete philosopher as consciously engaged in the pursuit of wisdom--with

[226] Ibid., p.109.

[227] Ibid., p.111.

objectifications of that activity in the objective pole.[228] In assessing Lonergan's emphasis on cognitional theory, we must distinguish within the objective pole itself a subjective dimension and an objective dimension. In the former case (subject as object) we have cognitional theory, an explanatory account of the process and structure of knowing present in consciousness. In the latter case (object as object) we have metaphysics and allied fields, fundamental positions about the structure of reality, the ultimate ground of being, and the relationship among the various sectors of being investigated by the several intellectual disciplines.

Now, for Lonergan, "metaphysics must be critically grounded in cognitional theory; metaphysical positions on reality must be consonant with basic positions on knowing, truth, and objectivity derived from cognitional theory; erroneous metaphysical statements are those, explicitly or implicitly, tied to a faulty cognitional theory, usually some variation of the rationalistic theory of truth. Correct metaphysical statements are those, explicitly implicitly, joined to a cognitional theory in which the process and structure of questioning is given full play."[229] The sense and meaning of reality, the metaphysical status of what is known, is determined by the orientation, pattern,

[228] Ibid., p.112.

[229] Ibid.

and norms of inquiry.[230] Hence within the objective aspect metaphysics is conditioned by cognitional theory.

But "the objective pole itself is conditioned by the subjective pole. Another way of putting this is to say that metaphysics is conditioned by methodology and methodology by method."[231] Lonergan has proclaimed that one of the most profound transformation in modern philosophy is the transition from logic to method.[232] We may judge what Lonergan is saying in two senses here. First, metaphysics, rather than simply founding itself upon the logical ordering of propositions, must assume the exigency of method. In this sense, metaphysics is one in which its conclusions would be verified by an appeal to cognitional theory and the conclusions of cognitional theory, in turn, would be verified by an appeal to cognitional fact. Secondly, cognitional theory is nothing but methodology, where methodology is a systematic reflection upon method, an objectification of method. Cognitional theory, then, is a reflection on the basic method of questioning, not on any given science or academic discipline or field of inquiry as such, but on the basic, or transcendental, structure of cognitional operations. This structure with its immanent norms embraces not only purely intellectual endeavors but

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[230] B. Lonergan, *Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, ed. by Frederick E. Crowe (Montreal: Palm Publishers, 1967), pp.227-231.

[231] T.J. McPartland, "Historicity and Philosophy," p.112.

[232] B. Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, pp.94, 305.

also practical reason, the self-correcting process of moral learning, the subtle path of spiritual inquiry, and the creative project of the aesthetic imagination. Lonergan defines method as "a normative pattern of recurrent and related operations yielding cumulative and progressive results."[233]

Now if method is restricted in meaning to the mere following of rules or to the interpretation accorded it by positivists and neo-Kantians, then, of course, Lonergan would join those, such as Gadamer, who attack the modern preoccupation with "method" as technique. However, for him method is taken in its etymological sense as "way" (*methodos*) and is seen as referring to the numerous ways of apprehending and communicating meaning. Therefore, the proper existential contours of method can be illustrated. In short, his treatment of methodical exigence thus shifts method from its classical Cartesian concern with axioms and rules of procedure into an appropriation of the inner dynamics of human performance in all domains mentioned by Lonergan such as mathematics, empirical science, common sense, human science, history, philosophy, and theology.[234] Hence he provides a telling critique of the dichotomy between subject and object in Cartesianism, Lockean empiricism, Kantianism, and Husserlian phenomenology.[235]

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[233] Ibid., p.4.

[234] See ibid., pp. xi, xii, 3ff.

[235] See M. Lamb, *History, Method and Theology*,, pp.55-109, 344-444.

The diagnosis of the various forms of disorder that mar the human community and the study of what constitutes true forms of order is the object of Lonergan's method, as it is Voegelin's primary task. In the diagnosis of the intellectual, moral and spiritual diseases that plague modern man--an analysis which cuts to the core of personal, social and historical disorder--the work of Lonergan, as that of Voegelin does, can be considered a therapeutic exercise for healing the torn and fragmented fabric of contemporary life. However, compared to Voegelin's theory of consciousness, Lonergan does not seem to develop the basic insight into man's participation in the order of being as far as Voegelin does. Lonergan's analysis of intentional consciousness and the method that stems from it does not penetrate to the level of order itself as it has emerged in history.[236] In Voegelin, existential order is primary and the knowledge that ensues from right order is a by-product, not an end itself. But Lonergan's primary emphasis is on the process of knowing and thus he tends to relegate existential order to a secondary result of that knowing.

[236] M. Morrissey, "Consciousness and the Search for Transcendent Order," pp.373-374.

Edmund Husserl and Maurice Merleau-Ponty

In its beginning, phenomenology, which is a new paradigm in man's understanding of himself as both knower and actor in the world, emerged as a philosophical movement concerned primarily with epistemological and methodological questions and appeared to have no interest in political inquiry, prescription, or transformation.[237] In the late 1960s and early 1970s, however, phenomenology began to exert its influence on American political science. It was reflected and echoed in redefining the responsibility of the political science profession itself in the name of the "Credo of Relevance," and, therefore, coincided with the "post-behavioral revolution." Indeed, the term "post-behavioral revolution" refers to the debut of phenomenology on the stage of American political science.

The term "post-behavioral" may be chronologically accurate since it came after political behavioralism. However, it is nonetheless "conceptually misleading, because phenomenology is a radical challenge to the theory of politics that is meant to uproot the existing sedimentations of scientific practices. Therefore, the conceptual challenges of phenomenology must be understood correctly as discontinuous rather than continuous with the scientific tradition of political behavioralism."[238] That is to say,

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[237] Scott Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical Theory: Philosophy and Political Inquiry* (Chicago; University of Chicago Press, 1984), p.90.

[238] H.Y. Jung, "Phenomenology as a Critique of Politics," *Human Studies*, 5 (1982), p.162.

phenomenology is a response to the crisis of political understanding due largely to the failure of scientism to take into account the experiential vectors of subjectivity in political inquiry.

It is Edmund Husserl with whom phenomenology emerges when he introduced in his *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology* a new avenue of approach to the theme of the crisis of European thought since Galileo and the revolutionary notion of life-world (*Lebenswelt*). Husserl's thought is immediately relevant to Voegelin's anti-positivistic stance. To rescue philosophy and humanity from the quicksand of naturalistic objectivism and positivism, Husserl criticizes them: "positivism, in a manner of speaking, decapitates philosophy" and "merely fact-minded sciences make merely fact-minded people."[239] In his criticism of positivism, Husserl asks: "Can the world, and human existence in it, truthfully have a meaning if the sciences recognize as true only what is objectively established in this fashion, and if history has nothing more to teach us than that all the shapes of the spiritual world, and the conditions of life, ideals, norms upon which man relies, form and dissolve themselves like fleeting waves, that it always was and ever will be so, that again and again

[239] E. Husserl, *The Crisis of European Sciences and Transcendental Phenomenology: An Introduction to Phenomenological Philosophy*, trans. by David Carr (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1970), pp.6-9. Hereafter all references to this work are made to Carr's translation and cited as *Crisis*.

reason must turn into nonsense, and well-being into misery?"[240]

The most important consequence of positivism "in its designating as metaphysical any theorizing that does not meet its requirements of adequate knowledge, and in its treatment of meaning as an epiphenomenon" is that it cuts the social sciences in general and political science in particular adrift from philosophy.[241] This segregation, as Merleau-Ponty points out, has very serious consequences, for in refusing philosophy and social science any meeting-point, and hence any cross-fertilization of ideas and concepts, they become mutually incomprehensible, placing culture "in a situation of permanent crisis."[242] As Leslie Spurling states, it is "not so much that artists and scientists no longer talk to each other. It is rather that they can no longer understand each other and, even more importantly, no longer understand themselves, since their knowledge is cut off from a philosophical understanding of the relation between knowing and being. Positivism cuts knowledge off from its roots in pre-reflective experience, in common-sense knowledge, and in the life and commitments of the theorist."[243] Hence the primary task of a phenomenological

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[240] Ibid., p.7.

[241] Laurie Spurling, *Phenomenology and the Social World: The Philosophy of Merleau-Ponty and Its Relation to the Social Sciences* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1977), p.84.

[242] M. Merleau-Ponty, *Signs*, p.98.

[243] L. Spurling, *Phenomenology and the Social World*, p.85.

philosophy which aims to challenge positivism is "to remind philosophy and social science of their common ground in the intentionality of consciousness."[244] Phenomenological philosophy "is not a particular body of knowledge; it is the vigilance which does not let us forget the source of all knowledge." For phenomenologists, it is phenomenology that reveals the essence of philosophy.[245] Indeed, it may be said that for them phenomenological thought is indistinguishable from philosophical thought.

According to Husserl, the defense of philosophy is essentially the defense of man and humanity since it is in itself a human cultural accomplishment. And the crisis of philosophy is also an aspect of the crisis of human existence, or, to say, man and humanity--particularly, "European humanity that has been uprooted from the life-world by the calculative thinking of positive objectivism where the human is defined both ontologically and methodologically more and more in terms of the natural or physical."[246] In this sense, Husserl spoke of "the philosopher as the functionary or civil servant of humanity." For him, "as philosophy is the 'nursemaid' of humanity, the sense of history depends on the sense of philosophy."[247] Thus the task of Husserl's phenomenology in

[244] Ibid., p.85.

[245] John Murungi, "Merleau-Ponty's Perspective on Politics," *Man and World*, 14:2 (1981), pp.141-142.

[246] H.Y. Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding*, p.18.

[247] Ibid., p.4.

his *Crisis* was twofold: "to show the rootedness of science in the life-world and by so doing to rediscover the *telos* of science and philosophy for human existence."[248] Insofar as mathematical and scientific construction is a product of the human mind and a socio-cultural object, the function of phenomenology is to clarify the conditions in which scientism takes for granted the life-world as the preconceptual infrastructure of all meaning: that is, scientism is indeed the "garb of ideas" (*Ideenkleid*). Scientism, according to Husserl, is fallacious because it is foremost a conceptual garb whereby what once was or was intended to be true in the mathematical formalization of nature as a "method" has gradually been taken or mistaken for reality itself: "What in truth is a method and the result of that method comes to be taken for reality"--that is, the conceptual sedimentation of mathematics has concealed the reality of the life-world to the extent that the former has replaced the latter. Husserl further writes:

> mathematics and mathematical science, as a garb of ideas, or the garb of symbols of the symbolic mathematical theories, encompasses everything which, for scientists and the educated generally, represents the life-world, dresses it up as "subjectively actual and true" nature. It is through the garb of ideas that we take for true being what is actually a method--a method which is designed for the purpose of progressively improving, *in infinitum*, through "scientific" predictions, those rough predictions which are the only ones originally possible within the sphere of what is actually experienced and experienceable in the life-world.[249]

[248] Ibid., p.18.

[249] E. Husserl, *Crisis*..., pp.51-52.

In this sense, scientism in the political science today is the blind transference of this methodolatry to the study of political reality: "political reality has turned into a mistress of scientific methodology. As an *archaeology*, phenomenology is capable of disclosing or undressing the cloak of scientism in which, unself-conscious of its origin, methodology replaces ontology or the truth of reality."[250] However, scientism is mistaken because, as Alfred Schutz puts it succinctly,

> The concept of Nature...with which the natural sciences have to deal is, as Husserl has shown, an idealizing abstraction from the Lebenswelt, an abstraction which, on principle and of course legitimately, excludes persons with their personal life and all objects of culture which originate as such in practical human activity. Exactly this layer of the Lebenswelt, however, from which the natural sciences have to abstract, is the social reality which the social sciences have to investigate.[251]

In short, phenomenology--unlike political behavioralism as a form of scientism--attempts to develop the methodology of political science on the basis of its ontological insight that the world of politics, unlike the world of physical objects, is constructed as the world of meaning whose subject is political man as actor on the social scene.

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[250] H.Y. Jung, "Phenomenology as a Critique...," p.172.

[251] A. Schutz, *Collected Papers*, vol.1: *The Problem of Social Reality*, p. 58.

In this sense, Husserl took as his task the development of a new philosophy which would facilitate the rigorous study of whatever is worthy of investigation. He proposed the phenomenological method as a way of considering features of the world according to their manner of appearance (as phenomena) for an inquiring consciousness. Intentionality was presented as a directedness toward the world in order to identify particular items as objects of study. The phenomenological reductions were articulated as devices for understanding whatever was under investigation: first, without determination as to the investigator's assumptions about, or the existence of, the object of inquiry (the transcendental reduction or *epoche*); and, second, with an identification of the meaning or pure essence of the object of inquiry (the eidetic reduction). In this way transcendental phenomenology could return to the things themselves, to things in the world. The object under investigation would be transformed methodologically into an object within the subjectivity of consciousness. Thus, as a form of transcendental philosophy,[252] Husserl's development of phenomenology is a response to the objectivistic, uncritical self-understanding of science, which takes the natural appearance of the world as given and final.[253]

[252] Husserl's phenomenology draws inspiration from the Kantian roots of all transcendental philosophy. Phenomenology parts company from Kantian philosophy, however, by removing the restrictions Kant placed on investigating the foundations of transcendental subjectivity as such. In light of the goal set by Husserl, Kant's transcendental philosophy is considered to be "far from accomplishing a truly radical grounding of philosophy, the totality of all sciences." See, E. Husserl, *Crisis...*, p,99.

[253] Ibid., p.68.

Transcendental philosophy itself, however, attempts to penetrate to the foundations of consciousness and the objects of consciousness and inquires "back into the ultimate source of all the formations of knowledge"; it involves "the knower's reflecting upon himself and his knowing life," in a self-critical, self-reflective manner.

Voegelin called Husserl's *Crisis* "the most important epistemological achievement of our times." However, he was deeply disappointed by it "as much as by any other work by Husserl": in his opinion, like all epistemology it was merely a "preface to Philosophy but not in itself a basic philosophical undertaking."[254] The problem with Husserl ultimately, as Voegelin wrote to Schutz, was that despite his claims he was not really a radical thinker at all in the sense of developing clarity regarding the roots of his thinking:[255] "his radicalism, which he constantly emphasized, is not a radicalism of philosophical existence, but only radicalism in the following out of a special problem" within the framework of questioning set up historically by such thinkers as Descartes and Kant.[256] With his conception of history, Voegelin argues further: "Husserl reached neither the 'objectivity of the philosophical cognition of the World' nor the 'fundamental

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[254] Voegelin's letter to Schutz, September 17, 1943. Cited in H. Wagner, *Alfred Schutz*, p.191, and H. Wagner, "Agreement in Discord...," p.76.

[255] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.34.

[256] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German) p.25.

subjectivity of the Ego.' Instead, his historical teleology is 'a case of Averoistic speculation,' the assumption of a world soul of which the individual soul is a particle. As a mere 'philosopher of Progress,' Husserl flew in the face of Kant, who had expressed his astonishment about the idea that earlier generations of mankind should merely be steps toward an ultimate objective. In his teleological announcement there was a 'messianic element' that could transform phenomenologists into an 'ultimate sect.'"[257] Voegelin regards Husserl's phenomenology as a theory that conceived consciousness as "a stream of perceptions and carefully analyzed its temporal structure and its relation to the external world on this foundation."

Schutz, who had an "advantage over Voegelin when speaking of Husserl's true intentions"[258] since he had known Husserl closely, countered this argument by pointing to what he considered essential achievements of Husserl: the discovery of the prepredicative sphere of immediate experience, the unearthing of the problem of intersubjectivity, the reduction of logic and the sciences to the grounds of the life-world, the analysis of inner-time consciousness and the constitution of space.[259] All of these achievements concern fundamental philosophical problems; if they fall under the category of epistemology,

[257] Voegelin's letter to Schutz, September 17, 1943. Cited in H. Wagner, *Alfred Schutz*, p.192.

[258] H. Wagner, "Agreement in Discord...," p.76.

[259] Ibid., p.76; and *Alfred Schutz*, p.191.

the epistemology is well worth the efforts of a philosopher.[260] Yet Schutz did not defend Husserl's transcendental phenomenology,[261] with which he had difficulties from the outset.

The critical exigence in Husserl's phenomenology concentrated on the epistemological question of why what the sciences do is knowledge. In this Husserl was primarily dependent upon the natural sciences and mathematics, with their logics, for paradigms to analyze phenomenologically. Yet his failure to clear up the ambiguities of the prior cognitional question of theory-praxis led to an irreconcilable conflict between his analysis of intentional constitution and his reliance on intuition in determining the epistemological criteria of verification. As a result, phenomenology was unable adequately to correlate the concrete *Lebenswelt* of common sense and the concept of world-constitution derived from intentionality.

Husserl's modification of the Hegelian account of phenomenology as "the science of the experience of consciousness" was again reinterpreted by other succeeding phenomenologists, such as Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, and Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[262] These leading figures' existentialization of the Husserlian position opened up new possibilities which seemed to be precluded

[260] Schutz's letter to Voegelin, November 11, 1943. H. Wagner, *Alfred Schutz*, p.191.

[261] H. Wagner, *Alfred Schutz*, p.191.

[262] Hugh J. Silverman, "Phenomenology," *Social Research*, 47:4 (Winter 1980), pp.705-706.

from Husserl's account. They were convinced that the transcendental perspective would create a distance from human experience rather than an orientation toward it. They were skeptical of the Cartesian dualism which Husserl espoused and which resulted in a radical separation between the empirical and the transcendental, between the objective and the subjective, between the world and the consciousness of it. They were concerned with our being-in-the-world as the experience of an existing self (which Heidegger called *Dasein*, which Sartre translated as 'human reality,' and which Merleau-Ponty characterized in terms of embodiment). They were committed to the experience of other people as a special type of encounter (for Heidegger as a case of Being-with, for Sartre according to concrete relations with others, and for Merleau-Ponty in terms of intercorporeity). They understood the experience of time as a temporality interwoven with the conditions of being rather than as an internal web of expectations and memories as in the Husserlian account.

Despite their many points of agreement in response to Husserl, Heidegger, Sartre, and Merleau-Ponty each held very different views as to the character of existential phenomenology. With some justification it is often said that there are as many phenomenologies as there are phenomenologists.[263] It is scarcely possible here to give due treatment to the complex history and nature of

[263] H.Y. Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding*, p.4.

phenomenology. But special attention is devoted to Merleau-Ponty who has contributed most abundantly and creatively to the emergence of an existential phenomenology which is both dialectical and relevant to political inquiry.

There emerged the "second school" of phenomenology, "existential phenomenology," which attempted "to synthesize the philosophical insights of Soren Kierkegaard, i.e., existentialism and those of Husserl, i.e., phenomenology. For existential phenomenologists, phenomenology is a descriptive and interpretive enterprise which explores the different regions of human existence, the meaning of man's placement in the world. "Existential phenomenology," Paul Ricoeur concisely states, "makes the transition between transcendental phenomenology, born of the reduction of everything to its appearing to me, and ontology, which restores the question of the sense of being for all that is said to 'exist.'"[264]

Merleau-Ponty emphasizes the inextricable, necessary attachment of consciousness to the world, a development fraught with dialectical relations. Scott Warren designates his phenomenology as "the first and most coherent expression of a dialectical existential phenomenology."[265] Unlike Heidegger and Sartre, Merleau-Ponty focuses the phenomenological project on an understanding of the

[264] Paul Ricouer, *Husserl: An Analysis of His Phenomenology*, trans. by Edward G. Ballard and Lester E. Embree (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967), p.212.

[265] In reconstructing Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, I am indebted to S. Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical...*, pp.102-115.

Lebenswelt, the intersubjective life-world. And unlike Sartre's focus on the phenomenology of pure, individual-personal consciousness, Merleau-Ponty directs phenomenology to the phenomena of perception as they are securely anchored in the subject as lived-body. He develops a phenomenology of our radical attachment to and presence in the world. His phenomenology develops as a mode of uncovering the inherent involvement of human existence in the world, particularly as it is grounded most fundamentally in our perception of the world.

Merleau-Ponty, in his phenomenology of perception, stressed the vitality of human experience and particularly our embodied existence as lived.[266] Therefore, although phenomenology is still, as it was with Husserl, a search for essences, but with two differences.[267] First, essence is found and replaced in existence. Second, therefore, phenomenology is not concerned with pure essences, since a complete reduction is impossible. Thus the phenomenological reduction does not lead us to pure essences any more. Rather it leads us to being-in-the-world which is grounded in a corporeal subject. The radical reduction leads neither to transcendental subjectivity nor to the pure nothingness of consciousness, but to the consciousness of our indestructible relation to the world. We are "full" of being, and we are "through and through compounded of

[266] H.J. Silverman, "Phenomenology," p.707.

[267] S. Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical...*, p.103.

relationships with the world," so that we are a subject which is embedded in the world or, in a sense, which is the world. The world is not something apart from us which we "posit" or which we possess; it is something we "live through."

Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological attempt to discover our most original way of being in the world leads him to the primacy of perception. "For if phenomenology is to go 'to the things themselves,' it must return to the prereflective *Lebenswelt*, which is to say, to primordial perception. It is neither consciousness nor Being which is primary; it is the world-and-our-relation-to-it-in-perception."[268] The world revealed in perception is the "cradle of meanings, the direction of all directions, and ground of all thinking" beyond which we cannot push.[269] For him, our primordial perception of the world presupposes meaning or pre-existent logos in the world.[270] Meaning is the ambiguous but fundamental Logos, already present in our original relation to the world."[271] The "primacy of perception" means "that the experience of perception is our presence at the moment

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[268] Ibid.

[269] M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. by Colin Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p.430.

[270] Ibid., pp.xvi, xx.

[271] See Pierre Thevenaz, *What is Phenomenology? and Other Essays*, ed. by James M. Edie and trans. by J.M. Edie, C. Courtney, and P. Brockelman (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1962), p.88.

when things, truths, values are constituted for us; that perception is a nascent logos."[272]

Phenomenology aims to describe the meaning-structure of human action from the standpoint of man as actor (that is, as attaching meaning to his action) rather than spectator. As an intentional analysis of meaningful action, phenomenology is not a psychology of introspection. For intentionality is neither entirely internal nor entirely external. By focusing on the essential structure of meaningful action, phenomenology attempts to avoid altogether a "psychologism" that reduces meaning (or everything) simply to psychological components. Only when the meaning of action is regarded as the simultaneous process of the internalization of the external and the externalization of the internal does one come to grips with the idea that man "is" his action. From a phenomenological point of view of thought and action, the idea of rigor in political behavioralism is exclusively a methodological principle, but it ignores another level of rigor that clarifies the nature of the knowing subject--the scientist as a knower. Science is a human activity which is founded upon the human life-world; there is no science without scientists and thus the scientist cannot ignore his rootedness in the life-world.

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[272] M. Merleau-Ponty, "The Primacy of Perception and Its Philosophical Consequences," in Fisher, *The Essential Writings of Merleau-Ponty*, p.61.

To some commentators, phenomenology's contribution to political science is understood as a paradigmatic challenge and a radical alternative or counter proposal not only to political behavioralism but also to the traditionalism propounded especially by Leo Strauss and Voegelin. From the perspective of phenomenology as a critique of politics, this kind of critical remark on both political behavioralism and traditionalism--especially Strauss' conception of politics--parallel Merleau-Ponty's phenomenological critique of "empiricism" on the one hand and "intellectualism" on the other for their failure to take into account the role of philosophy as an active participation in the creation of meaning or the construction of reality; that is, both are incapable of explaining adequately, albeit in different ways, the *diatactics* of the noetic act and the noematic object.[273]

For Merleau-Ponty, not only positivism (empiricism) but also traditionalism (intellectualism) maintain a faulty and alienated duality of subject and object. The former entails an abstraction from lived existence, while the latter entails an abstraction within the whole of reality and is thus reductionist in character. In this sense, "the competition between traditional philosophy's reliance upon detached and abstracted subjectivity, and positivism's reliance upon a reductionist objectivity, is an illusory

[273] H.Y. Jung, "Phenomenology as a Critique...," p.166.

rivalry."[274] In its most general formulation, Merleau-Ponty states it as follows:

> There can be no rivalry between scientific knowledge and the metaphysical knowing which continually confronts the former with its task. A science without philosophy would literally not know what it was talking about. A philosophy without methodical exploration of phenomena would end up with nothing but formal truths, which is to say, errors.[275]

Responding from this philosophical perspective of Merleau-Ponty's existential phenomenology, a form of which is Merleau-Ponty's existential phenomenology, Scott Warren claims that the traditionalist critique of positivism such as that of Voegelin is inadequate because of "its negative value to the positive assumptions contained within it." Warren continues to claim: "The epistemological emphasis on the authority of reason implies a depreciation of the cognitive importance of unreason as well as the prerational, prereflective dimension of human and political life. This assumption can often culminate in a form of 'rationalism,' even if not to the extreme of the narrow, formalistic rationalism of the Enlightenment. The ontological emphasis on an absolute, or at least objectively structured, reality existing independently of human knowledge implies a depreciation of the importance of a creative epistemological

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[274] S. Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical...*, p.114.

[275] M. Merleau-Ponty, *Sense and Non-sense*, p.97.

and practical subjectivity in shaping the knowledge and structure of reality itself."[276]

However, with regard to phenomenology, there emerge questions which should be paramount in serious work in political inquiry: "what are the principles of justice and the public good that should direct and inform the study of politics?" and "what are the grounds by which policies and principles can be justified?" As Eugene Miller claims, the phenomenologists--in particular, Merleau-Ponty--are both epistemologically and ethically relativistic, and therefore without any firm grounds for sound political judgment.[277] Furthermore, in contrast to Voegelin's thought which is concerned with the search of the order of being through the restoration of philosophical inquiry based on philosophy of history, Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology is concerned more with the dynamics of history than the order of being, with envisioning new possibilities of political life than conformity to transcendent life of philosophic theory. In other words, despite what appear to be significant affinities between Voegelin and Merleau-Ponty in that for both of them the ontology of man is the basis of epistemology, they are in fundamental disagreement in their ontological concern. What is radical and rigorous in phenomenological thinking in relation to political inquiry

[276] S. Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical...*, pp.3-4.

[277] Eugene Miller, "Positivism, Historicism, and Political Inquiry," *American Political Science Review*, 67:3 (September 1972), pp.796-817.

is twofold: (1) the recovery of ontology as the basis of epistemology and (2) the self-examination of thinking consciousness itself as the human project.[278] Like Voegelin, phenomenologists in general and Merleau-Ponty in particular dwell on the nature or essence of man which defines the aim of their political thought. However, their ontological concern is flawed. While there is an implicit theological concern and it is of the character of that type of ontology whose beginning point is the self in interaction with the world, Merleau-Ponty's conception of ontology is flawed because it is in conflict with the onto-theological character of theorizing. To sketch the contrast let's turn to the onto-theological implications of Voegelin's philosophy.

To Voegelin, political behavior must be understood not in relation to a constructed theory but in the context of the order of the world and its ground: "the prerequisite of analysis is...the perception of the order of being unto its origin in transcendent being, in particular, the loving openness of the soul to its transcendent ground of order."[279] That is the Voegelinian philosophical science of politics intends to keep political science in touch with the deeper and profounder aspects of human experience. Thus Voegelin refers to certain "border experiences"--the Christian meaning of faith, the Jewish experience of

[278] H.Y. Jung, *The Crisis of Political Understanding*, p.166.

[279] *SPG*, p.21.

revelation, Plato's myth of the Last Judgment, and Islamic prayer exercises--"in which man's knowledge of transcendent being, and thereby of the origin and meaning of mundane being is constituted."[280] In these experiences, nothing certain and tangible is given. There is no precise political principle, no clear social vision and no ideology that is provided. But there is an intimation of the source and ground of the world; there is an awareness of final judgment; there is a hint of the mystery of the whole; there is an experience of the existence of God as the source and sustainer of one's being. From the standpoint of Voegelin's philosophy, God is not an 'option' that may be simply supposed or not supposed at will, bracketed or unbracketed as deemed useful. God is the transcendent-divine ground of being to which the human psyche can attune itself, the end and judge of the political order. And openness to the reality of God is essential to any adequate study of politics.[281] Another way to formulate the same perspective is this: ethics and politics belong together as "sciences of the order in which human nature reaches its maximal actualization,"[282] and thus any science of politics that is, in principle, divorced from philosophical anthropology and onto-theology is deficient.

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[280] Ibid., p.110.

[281] Douglas Sturm, "Politics and Divinity: Three Approaches in American Political Science," *Thought*, 52:207 (December 1977), p.353.

[282] *NSP*, p.12.

The phenomenological approach to the experience of divinity rests on a new understanding of the character of human experience. In the phenomenological approach, God's presence is discovered in one's interaction with the world. "The new beginning for theological method...is the ingressive relationship of the self and the world to each other."[283] Within the context of this understanding of experience, phenomenologists argue that the encounter with the reality to which supreme devotion is directed, named God within Judeo-Christian tradition, is direct but not separate from one's relation to the world. The encounter with God is a dimension of one's experience in and with the world. Regarding to this notion of encounter with God, John Smith argues:

> There is no experience of God that is not at the same time experience of something else. That is to say, the presence of God is always mediated by signs or comes through a medium, even though the presence itself is genuine and the experience direct...The indication or sign of the divine presence is supplied by or found implicit in the inherited religious tradition.[284]

Within the type of Merleau-Ponty's ontology, self, world and God are co-present and co-known.[285] God is directly present in and through one's experience of the world. In other

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[283] Clark M. Williamson, "Tillich"s 'Two Types of Philosophy of Religion: A Reconsideration," *Journal of Religion*, 52:3 (July 1972), p.219.

[284] John E. Smith, *Experience and God*, p.150.

[285] John C. Robertson, "Tillich's 'Two Types' and the Transcendental Method," *Journal of Religion*, 55:4 (April 1975), pp.216-217.

words, while phenomenology's informing experiential structure is strikingly congruent with the structure of the religious dimension of experience, it has not been and is not explicitly onto-theological. The phenomenologists seem to insist that politics and political science are both not only ways of doing but also ways of being. They are ways of interacting with the *Lebenswelt*, and are responsible for the forms and the consequences of that interaction. In short, while, for Voegelin, God and the divine reality is the transcendent source of the order of being and the ultimate standard for the order of politics, for Merleau-Ponty, apprehensions of divine and political realities are in principle both part and parcel of one's lived-experience of the world. Thus, for Merleau-Ponty, God, instead of being the transcendent source of the order of being, may become the immanent and temporal.

As I have already mentioned, Voegelin's work is an attempt to provide an answer to the positivistic world view of man, politics and history by means of the restoration of the traditional political philosophy of the West. In the following two chapters the substance of Eric Voegelin's thought as it has evolved over the years will be presented. Any study of Voegelin's work must begin with his views on the meaning of political reality and of the peculiar technical vocabulary that was engendered during the course of forming the concepts of the classical political

philosophy and of the concepts that he has developed in his work. The philosophical core of Voegelin's thought is represented in the three terms, reality, experience, and symbolism. Thus, the primary focus will be on his developing of theory of political reality (Chapter Three) and theory of modernity and gnosticism as a civilizational critique (Chapter Four). First of all, toward the end of the chapter Three, i.e., to recount Voegelin's speculation of political reality, the "theory of consciousness" (as a philosophical anthropology), "theory of representation" (as a philosophy of society), and "theory of history," which are altogether comprising an investigation of reality, will be examined.

REALITY AND KNOWLEDGE IN VOEGELIN'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

VOLUME II

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CHAPTER III

ERIC VOEGELIN AND POLITICAL REALITY

In the preceding chapters we have endeavored to illuminate that "scientific" constructs have been the basis of our knowledge of mundane reality, i.e., space-time reality, and that scientism, though it had become a dominant commitment among many inquirers, does not provide an appropriate or productive approach to political knowledge. The primary concern of this chapter is to explore one general but ultimate question, namely, what is political reality. Generally speaking, the aim of the political science is to organize in a disciplined way the knowledge of the political reality as a whole. In a situation where controversy over how best to approach the study of political reality still permeates the discipline of political inquiry, it is required to investigate what political reality is. With the investigation an answer to the question, "what is the proper approach to study political reality?" will, then, be obviously provided: i.e., the philosophical science of politics is a proper and desirable approach to the study of political reality.

Before getting into a review of Voegelin's philosophy of political reality, we first examine in more detail why

the positivist or scientistic inquiry is improper as a search for truth concerning the nature of reality. That is, I intend to challenge the positivistic view at its foundations, by showing that to claim to have knowledge of the spatio-temporal reality is a crude empiricism and naive realism and the uncertainty is a vital nature of reality. Then, I will try to review what seems to me the core of Voegelin's philosophy, i.e., his theory of political reality. To do so, I will illustrate his theory of consciousness, theory of representation, and theory of history, respectively. They are resonant with the classical topics of political inquiry: the questions of human nature, political order and history.

1. REALITY: UNCERTAINTY AND KNOWLEDGE

Positivistic Understanding of Reality

We speak of "knowledge" and "reality." Most of us suppose we know roughly what reality is. Moreover, we act as if we know how we know reality. But our difficulty today in addressing them is that the epistemology has come to mean almost exclusively the methodology of the natural sciences and, more recently and belatedly, the positivistic social sciences, to the exclusion of any possibility of knowing extra-mundane reality. We are not living in a traditional

world built on certain "metaphysical"[1] assumptions. We live in an age of scientistic analysis and modern rationalistic reason. The modern culture leads us to believe in a physical space-time reality that is explored and increasingly discovered to us in physical sciences.

The physical is the mask of reality revealed by our sensual experiences. Sensation possesses two fundamental forms: (1) the mask of reality perceived as objects visible to our ordinary outer senses and (2) the mask of reality perceived as subjects and visible primarily to our emotional senses. And this sensual experiences become conscious through a double process:[2] (1) nerve stimulation in the inner organs such as the stomach and heart or in outer organs such as the eye, ear, and skin and (2) immediate and spontaneous processing of these stimulations by the mind, which places chaotic stimuli within pre-defined categories such as fear, anger, blue, red, hot, and cold. In this sense, it is obvious that the physical is always and inevitably a construct of the human mind.

Moreover, as a result of the Kantian dualism's legacy, in essence, the contemporary understanding of knowledge and reality rests on what has been called the myth of objective consciousness. The myth of objective consciousness assumes

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[1] The term "metaphysical" is used here both in its traditional sense--to mean the science of reality as such and, more significantly, in its literal sense--as the study of what is beyond physics, i.e., beyond the physical.

[2] See Ronald B. Puhek, *The Metaphysical Imperative: A Critique of the Modern Approach to Science* (Washington, D.C.: University Press of America, 1982), pp.3-4.

that the only "facts" in the world--the only things that are real--are those things that are apart from us and that those objective facts become truths. According to this myth, things have a reality if we can perceive them objectively. Viewed from this myth, thus, it is implied that we can add and subtract reality. For most of the modern unreflective empiricists, this is the paradigm of reality against which all other claims to objectivity have to be measured. In other words, scientism presupposes the thesis that there is only mundane, spatio-temporal reality and that this reality is sufficiently understandable in terms of modern scientific methods.

We also believe in the existence of other persons with whom we join in groups and societies and who create a kind of man-made reality of social rules, roles, norms, and institutions. These are also space-time entities, available for study as are the objects of natural sciences. They form a humanly created reality like other social or political phenomena. For example, political reality conceived by positivism is, in David Levy's terms, a reality of factual variables whose correlations, when formulated in political scientific laws, are conceived as causal determinants of all that happens in society.[3] Thus political positivism systematically ignores, or at least underestimates, "the extent to which political reality is a realm of more or less rational individuals freely choosing lines of action in

[3] David Levy, *Realism* (Manchester: Carcanet New Press, 1981), p.18.

accord with personal systems of relevance and subjective estimates of the options available."[4] Consequently, many political behavioralists, in a variety of ways, reduce a totality of political reality to one of its parts.

What we know conventionally the word reality, therefore, tends to be in its parochially narrower sense. It is not to much to say that modern man is rootless and empty, because he has lost his sense of relationship to reality in its fullness. Because of the influence of solipsistic epistemological narrowness of rationalism, modern man tends to reduce the totality or multi-dimensional character of reality to one aspect of it. Without the search for the ground and nature of transcendental and metaphysical reality, knowledge in modern age, as we witnessed in preceding chapters, becomes merely positivistic accumulations of data. The political positivists at times engage in painstaking labor on trivial matters while ignoring political reality which is obvious.[5]

In Germino's words, "reality in politics, we have heard, is concerned with 'who gets what, when, and how,' with the struggle to attain prestige, power, and wealth, and

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[4] Ibid., p.19.

[5] Christian Bay has described the situation well in his distinction between "politics" and "pseudo-politics." Bay distinguishes "political" which improves the conditions of human needs and "pseudo-political" which resembles the political but is primarily concerned with personal neurosis or interest group advantage, therefore the counterfeit of true politics. "A growing and now indeed a predominant proportion of leading American political scientists, the behavioralists, have become determined to achieve science. Yet, in the process, many of them remain open to the charge of strenuously avoiding that dangerous subject, politics." C. Bay, "Politics and Pseudo-Politics: A Critical Evaluation of Some Behavioral Literature," *American Political Science Review*, 59:1 (May 1965), p.39.

with the corruption that so often attend this struggle."[6] It is not easy to accept this particular reality as normative. "We think that both individually and as a nation we can do better than this, and part of our objective in describing what is going on is to awaken people to the need to do better. We become restless in the Cave, as we experience the pull of a reality beyond its confines."[7] Crudely stated, this is the epistemological problem posed by the naturalist and scientistic paradigm. I contend that the primary source of intellectual mistakes and consequent life problems in our time is the tendency to take the physical as the most real and concrete while relegating the metaphysical to the speculative, unreal, and abstract. Positivistic inquirers assume that they are dealing with reality and philosophical inquirers only are dealing with pure and empty speculation, not with reality.

However, the use of positivistic standards in political studies is often at the cost of neglecting important political existence and failing to ask deeper questions about the truth-content of political reality. With regard to the social or political phenomena, it should not be neglected that there is a reality beyond and above the mundane, i.e., an extra-spatio-temporal reality, that we can know this reality, albeit imperfectly, and that it is not

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[6] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's Framework for Political Evaluation in His Recently Published Work," *American Political Science Review*, 72 (1978), p.110. Reprinted in E. Sandoz, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Thought* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982), pp.115-133.

[7] Ibid., p.110.

discovered by the modern scientific methods. The modern rationalistic culture does not have room for any taken-for-granted reality of this kind. If it is believed at all, it will either be an optional extra to the reality in which we all live, or it will have to be integrated with our other beliefs as a result of a much deeper critique of space-time reality and of natural scientific knowledge. It is worth noting that, since it fails to appreciate the truth-content of reality, the modern scientistic paradigm makes reality dependent on methodology; reality is intrinsically "verificationist" in that it assumes that what is in space-time is all there is, because that is what we appear to have direct access to, and it is reinforced in everyday interactions and in the success of science.

Therefore, I contend that the "pseudo-scientific" laws of politics born up by political positivism are based on profound misunderstandings about the relationship between reality and knowledge. The result of the misunderstandings was narrowness stemming from what Herbert Marcuse was to call the "uni-dimensional" view of man and reality.[8] Furthermore, the positivistic tradition does "not only oversimplify, it falsifies reality."[9] Being conscious of this modern epistemological pitfall, we may now proceed to an investigation that will provide us a glimpse of the nature of the modern natural sciences.

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[8] See Herbert Marcuse, *One-dimensional Man* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1964).

[9] Jean Blondel, *The Discipline of Politics* (London: Butterworths, 1981), p.135.

Quantum Mechanics and Uncertainty

Admittedly, the rise of modern science had brought about an important revision in man's conception of the world and his relation to it. This revision pierced to the basis of man's search for reality. As we have mentioned, modern science is what survives experimentation and test; the results of experiments may feed back to change the scientific theory; and sometimes, as with Kuhn's conception of paradigm change,[10] to suggest revolutionary changes in natural cosmology.

During the past four centuries since the emergence of the modern science, however, we have learned that modern scientific theories do not provide final, true, and objective knowledge of the world and cosmos, even in its physical sense. We have seen in a preceding chapter that the Aristotelian and medieval worldview had been displaced by the new cosmologies of Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, and Newton. But, note that this new cosmology has in turn been displaced by the modern physics of relativity and quantum mechanics. We can explain the motion of the planet Mercury better and better in terms of successive cosmologies that are radically different from one another: earth-centered epicycles (Ptolemy), helio-centered epicycles (Copernicus), an ellipse with one focus at the sun (Kepler), a body moving

[10] T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolution*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

according to the mechanical dynamics of gravity (Newton), or relativity theory (Einstein).

Human minds in general and the natural scientist's mind in particular bend themselves to grasp reality. However, relativity theory and quantum physics bring a shock to physical science since it indicates that reality is not the object of investigation.[11] Physics pretends to recover itself by adopting relativity theory as an image of reality.[12] Thus the dominant strands of contemporary physics converge in the conviction that the real is relative--one planet is relative to another, time is relative to speed, what is seen is relative to the seer. Therefore, physical science for which matter has been a primary reality is, in fact, no longer a "science of reality" but, at the deepest level, a "science of prediction and probable outcomes." Since the modern scientism started a disparate line of conception and investigation which, by various paths, has led to our modern parochial conceptions of reality, few modern scientists are very much disturbed by this ignorance of reality, and at best everyone is interested only in reducing the range of probability.

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[11] See, Werner Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy: The Revolution in Modern Science* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1958), pp.167-186.

[12] Indeed, viewed from the perspective of reality in its totality, not merely is the physical less real than the metaphysical but it is not real at all, because the physical is always and inevitably a construct of the human mind. Behind the physical stands the real: the physical is only a manifestation of the relationship between the real and one or another of our senses. It is for this reason that physics must always be founded upon the principle of relativity. Everything in physics, or everything that is physical, appears relative to everything else since every physical thing is relative to us. R.E. Puhek, *The Metaphysical Imperative*, pp.4-5.

Nevertheless, genuine physical scientists are profoundly disturbed by the possibility that they are not studying and searching reality.[13] However, their modern rationalistic, utilitarian brethren in the positivist social sciences, as well as the public generally, may be interested primarily in the fruits of physical sciences: yet even here it should be noted that a deep suspicion arises against modern science.

Indeed, it may seem paradoxical that while a confidence in the predictions men make on the basis of modern scientific theory goes on to increase, the understanding of mutability of modern scientific theory grows simultaneously. Werner Heisenberg and others set forth something quite new, and even astonishing from the viewpoint of the modern physical, or so-called objective science: the principle of indeterminacy or uncertainty principle emanated from the quantum theory. Just what the uncertainty or inaccuracy means cannot be stated with any degree of assurance. What should be stressed here is that the whole issue is a matter of speculation and controversy.[14] As Einstein has emphasized, the physical scientist only arrives at his

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[13] Ibid., p.6.

[14] According to Werner Heisenberg, the physicist is forced to choose whether to determine the location of an electron or to ascertain its speed with precision, since he cannot do both. Position and velocity seem to be so related that no two particles can occupy the same state or have the same conditions of potential energy, kinetic energy, and direction of spin. At least one of the conditions must be different. Furthermore, electrons appear to jump from one orbit to another in an unpredictable manner. Physicists are unable to predict where these electrons will go or how long they will take to reach their new position. The very act of observation seems to change what is under observation, since some signal must be transmitted from the particle or system to the observer. See W. Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy*, pp.147-206.

theory by speculative means.[15] Once again, physics and the physical sciences assume at least the reality of the physical world. But the only basis for such an assumption is beyond the physical world--i.e., meta-physical: the speculation about and the judgment of reality, like that of truth, is fundamentally meta-physical. Evidences that can be used in the process of experimentation and verification may be considered physical, but the inferential process of assessment and judgment itself is inevitably meta-physical. Quantum mechanics, especially its Heisenberg principle of uncertainty, has been notable for the change it has brought in the natural scientist's epistemological theory of the relation of the experimenter to the object of his scientific knowledge. Quantum physics has brought the concept of potentiality which was central to the Aristotelian worldview back into physical science.[16] Thus to many people the foundations of modern science are undergoing radical change.

At this point, it is noteworthy that uncertainty and vagueness is a vital and necessary part of the nature of reality, as evinced even in the quantum physics. Certainty is indeed not available to man. Only God can be certain of things, man as participant in the drama of life can never know it fully or certainly. Such an observation may not help much, admittedly, but nevertheless it discloses what is true. Voegelin's words, "fall from uncertain truth into

[15] F.S.C. Northrop, "Introduction," in W. Heisenberg, *Physics and Philosophy*, p.3.

[16] Ibid., p.6.

certain untruth"[17] illustrate the paradox of certainty and uncertainty. Germino offers a forceful presentation of the problem of certainty by stating that the modern totalitarian ideologies are a "fall from existence in the uncertain truth of faith to existence in the certain untruth of ideology."[18] Socrates, Plato, and Christianity, offer only an uncertain truth whereas Marxism and National Socialism, for example, offer certainty, mostly wrong, of course, but at least certainty.

Moreover, in this day people are in general enamored with the illusion of certainty. They like to impose upon an intractable and ambiguous reality a precise and predictable mental construct which may or may not reflect that reality but at least the construct is easier to deal with. Even though all men are believed to know something of the order of being, the order of being or reality as a whole is uncertain or unknowable to man in its essence. It is partly because man, the knower, is himself part, not the whole, of this order. In the spatio-temporal sense, the limitation of man's knowledge is obvious; man cannot be everywhere in place and time. But the eternal God is not bound by such limitations.

There is only one road for man out of this dilemma, the one chosen by Homer, Hesiod, Parmenides, Socrates, Plato and

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[17] E. Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism* (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1968), p.100. Hereafter *SPG*.

[18] D. Germino, *Political Science and Christian Faith* (New York: Faculty Christian Fellowship, 1964), p.10.

Aristotle: to participate in the divine knowledge through opening one's human soul up to the divine. With the differentiation of knowledge into human and divine knowledge, the point of departure is the awareness of human existence as bound by the vastness of the uncharted territory of the whole. Though the condition of man's existence is his partnership in transcendent reality, he never knows what the essential order of this reality may be. What is brought into focus in the present case is the actual limitation of man's ability to know, imposed on him by the physical conditions of his body in the world.

Nonetheless, although man is ignorant concerning the whole order of being and consequently the essence of his own existence, it never necessarily implies that he does not know of some parts of the whole. First, man is also aware that he possesses the faculty of *nous* through which the mystery of reality as process becomes luminous to itself *qua* mystery. Philosophy as the love of wisdom is a knowing and, at the same time not-knowing, and includes a knowledge of ignorance and *cognitio fidei*, knowledge based on faith, in the sense of *Hebrews* 11:1-3: "Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which appear." Faith is the existential virtue of the soul open to the nonmetric, invisible ground: it is the "evidence of things not seen." Therefore, knowledge distinguishes the fields of reality and establishes structures of relationship which can

ultimately culminate in the Socratic Irony: I know that I don't know. In other words, knowledge itself is a symbol arising out of the conscious distinction between what is merely taken for granted, what is more or less strongly believed, what is thought to be true, and what is not or cannot be seen.

There is indeed a "progression of knowledge concerning the order of the phenomenal world accompanied by significant changes in the symbolization of man's partnership in the whole order of being."[19] Political positivists dare to apply this principle to the theory of political knowledge. For example, Karl W. Deutsch writes that "knowledge in the social sciences can be applied to social performance in the same sense as knowledge in the natural sciences has been."[20] However, political positivists neglect that the progression of knowledge concerning the phenomenal world does not change man's essential ignorance; its effects may, on the contrary, further deepen it. For it is likely to lead man to believe that the expansion of knowledge concerning other parts of the whole constitutes an increase of knowledge concerning the whole and man's existence as part of it. However, it is fallacious to apply to unseen extra-mundane reality the same

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[19] Thomas Hollweck, "Truth and Relativity: On the Historical Emergence of Truth," in P.J. Opitz and G. Sebba, eds., *The Philosophy of Order* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1981), p.125.

[20] Karl W. Deutsch, "What Do We Mean by Advances in the Social Sciences?" in K.W. Deutsch, Andrei S. Markovits and John Platt, eds., *Advances in the Social Sciences, 1900-1980: What, Who, Where, How?* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1986), p.10.

tests of validity one applies in the investigation of the phenomenal world. As Thomas Hollweck says:

> This illusion is created by a misunderstanding of the process of symbolization. The symbol renders the essentially unknowable order of being intelligible through interpreting the unknown in analogy with the known, or supposedly known. The expansion of knowledge about the phenomenal world frequently coincides with a weakening in man's sensibility to his participation in the order of being. Or, as one can formulate it, intoxication with the known and knowable displaces the sense of the unknown and unknowable."[21]

For political positivists, uncertainty is "any lack of sure knowledge about the course of past, present, future, or hypothetical events." And most uncertainty is thought to be "removable through the acquisition of information, if a sufficient quantity of data is available."[22] In this sense, it can be said that political positivists fallaciously attempt to transform the uncertainties and ambiguities of the experience of existence into the certainties of one-dimensional mundane or intramundane experience.

Even the most heroic efforts to know cannot lead to more than partial knowledge at best. Quite often they result in the constructions of speculative systems purporting to explain the whole, generated by a profound fear that ignorance would be as much worse as physical death. "Out of their anxiety regarding the structure of existence, they create a 'second reality' which gives more

[21] T. Hollweck, "Truth and Relativity," p.125.

[22] See Anthony Downs, *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (New York: Harper & Row, 1957), p.77.

assurance to them than the apprehension of the ground of being by faith and analogical reasoning affords."[23] For example, Marx, Durkheim, and Weber all discussed a social reality within spatio-temporal dimension. There is a sense in which the holder of any ideology would hold that the reality of the concepts underlies the ideology. Marx came to postulate social realities, such as the class struggle which emerge from the behavior of large groups of people and their institutions and which could not have been predicted from individual or small-group behavior alone. The next chapter will focus in detail on the gnostic creation of "second reality" rendered by the modern ideologies, including positivism.

Reality as an Existential Experience

Here we need to elucidate what reality is, especially what political reality stands for in its full sense, as articulated in Voegelin's philosophical work. Genetically, the real is the actual, or the existing; the term refers to things or events belonging to the order of nature or existing in their own right, as opposed to the imaginary, the artificial, the fictitious. "Real" refers to what "is". Reality is the state or quality of being real or actually existent, in contrast to what is mere appearance or imagination. It stands for everything that does not exist

[23] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's Contribution to Contemporary Political Theory," *Review of Politics*, 26:3 (July 1964), p.397.

solely as an object of the human mind, or of our imagination; whether it be visible or invisible, material or spiritual, finite or infinite. Essentially, it is the reality into which men are born and that which they leave behind them when they die. But visible, material, finite substratum, though indispensable, is not enough.

In the *Republic*, Plato attempts to explain, by analogy, his view of the structure of reality. He does this first by verbal description, then by the metaphor of a divided line, and finally with the Allegory of the Cave.[24] There Plato is saying that what we call reality is in fact simply shadows on the wall of the cave and that the things we consider important like prestige, fame, power, and money are in fact meaningless illusions. He is suggesting that beyond all that conventional stuff is another world, perceivable to the opened soul, that is harmonious, ordered, and lasting. There is a reality more real than the one we see and touch, and the soul, if it would be well-ordered, must attempt the long and difficult ascent up into that world. All specific questions concerning our existence as human beings are ultimately rooted in the matrix of reality.[25] And the term reality indicates the totality of all that which is not there exclusively by human making; that which men find massively present in the world, including the cosmos itself. It includes, not only myself, but all my surroundings, all

[24] Plato, *Republic*, 507A-517C.

[25] E. Voegelin, "On Debate and Existence," *Intercollegiate Review*, 3:4-5 (March-April 1967), p.143.

human beings, the whole world, etc. Thus, it is evident that man who searches for the root of all reality, should not limit himself to the knowledge of only one or the other of its aspects. He will not be able to reach his purpose unless he comes into contact with reality in its totality.

Raising the basic philosophic problem of the nature of reality is, as Germino says, "to unlock a Pandora's box of difficulties."[26] For Voegelin, the most basic philosophical problem is the nature of reality.[27] Unfortunately, however, this is precisely the problem which leading modern philosophers tend to neglect, or to assume to have been resolved in some common sense fashion, or to be meaningless and unverifiable.[28] It has been largely ignored that if one attempts to abolish the problem of reality as Marx did, one also abolishes philosophy. A philosophy worthy of the name--that is, one whose symbols are recognizably equivalent to other symbols which have noetically illumined the nature of reality--will acknowledge that reality is not a disorderly flux of events but is an intelligible process. In this sense, reality is the "source of somatic experience and its own source is the Platonic reality of which man has experience in the mode of certitude."[29]

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[26] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's Framework...," p.110.

[27] E. Voegelin, *From Enlightenment to Revolution*, ed. by John H. Hallowell (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1975), p.257. Hereafter *FETR*.

[28] K. Keulman, "The Balance of Consciousness," (Ph.D. Dissertation, St. Michael's College, University of Toronto, 1980), p.43.

[29] Eric Harold Wainright, "The Zetema of Eric Voegelin: Symbol and Experience in Political Reality," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of South Africa, 1978), p.24.

The term reality is not an intangible concept, but rather it refers to the total order of meaningful experience both actual and possible. What is experienced is real, and, conversely, what is real is (at least in part) experienceable. For Voegelin, therefore, the philosopher who searches for the reality must experience it not by just one or several of his knowing faculties but by his whole being. He must open his whole self so that the experience involves all that he "is" and thus becomes an "existential experience." Consequently, in the existential experience man opens himself with his whole being in order to participate in reality in its comprehensive universality. And Voegelin maintains that fundamentally existence is not lived blindly but is illuminated by consciousness. From this point of view, "reality, at its deepest level, is not a 'thing' or a 'fact,' but an existential tension which is structured, through the poles of 'world' and 'Beyond,' as a pull toward the perfect fullness and luminosity of being that is symbolized in the language of myth by the realm of the divine. The substance of reality, in other words, at least as far as it can be known by man in epistemic experience, is nothing other than the love of God."[30] However, reality as experienced has a structure of multiple meanings. Before exploring the theory of consciousness,

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[30] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin* (Seattle: University of Washinton Press, 1981), p.126.

thus, let's turn to look at Voegelin's speculation on the multiple meanings of reality.

Two Modes of Reality

The term reality, as Voegelin acknowledges, has been used in more than one sense, and the several meanings seem to be at cross-purposes.[31] "The multiple meanings of reality are not caused by loose usage of the term, but reflect the structure of reality itself."[32] As modes expressing the structure of reality, Voegelin distinguishes the realities which are imagined and which are experienced--more accurately, experienced in consciousness. He retains both levels of reality, but recognizes which of them is imaginative or speculative and which is experienced concretely in consciousness. Both the reality imagined and the reality experienced make up the reality.

However, the differentiating experiences are theophanic events (encounters with the divine) to which man can respond by questioning and searching. In other words, reality is dynamically alive, not with imagination, but with theophanic events that point toward an experience of ultimate transfiguration or immortalization, as St. Paul speaks of it. Through the progress of human consciousness reality becomes increasingly self-conscious and articulates its

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[31] E. Voegelin, "The Eclipse of Reality," in Maurice Natanson, ed., *Phenomenology and Social Reality: Essays in Memory of Alfred Schutz* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), p.186.

[32] Ibid.

meaning. Or, as Voegelin paraphrases Plato, the soul and its movement are experienced as "the area of reality in which the cosmic process becomes luminous for its meaning."[33] Though conciousness develops, or differentiates, human beings continue to be subject to the biological rhythms of nature, and even those who have experienced the transfigurating movement of the soul are not immune to biological death. Socrates, and even Jesus Christ himself, suffered physical death. The structure of reality revealed itself, therefore, to be paradoxical. Human existence is simultaneously both mortal and immortal. This paradox, says Voegelin, is "the very structure of existence itself," and it must be respected if consciousness is not to lose its balance. Since the noetic theophanies reveal a movement of reality beyond itself, man, in interpreting his own experiences, must deal with "the paradox of a recognizably structured process that is recognizably moving beyond its structure."[34] In the exegesis of reality this paradox can easily derail into misconstructions, because the force of the spiritual experiences is such that unbalancing is very likely.

In relation to this paradox of a structured process of reality, Voegelin presents a commentary in *The World of the Polis* on Parmenides' discussion of *aletheia* (Truth) and *doxa*

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[33] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.4, *The Ecumenic Age* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1974), p.187. Hereafter, *OH*, IV.

[34] *OH*, IV, p.227.

(Delusion): "the Delusion is quite as true as the Truth, if by truth we mean an adequate and consistent articulation of an experience...Being and Delusion are not two different worlds; they are two aspects of one world that is given in two kinds of cognitive experiences of the same human being."[35] Both are knowledge in the sense that they are ways of construing reality; the distinction is between levels or degrees of reality: "Truth is the philosophy of the realissimum that we experience if we follow the way of immortalization in the soul; Delusion is the philosophy of the reality that we experience as men who live and die in a world that itself is distended in time with a beginning and an end. The characterization of this philosophy of reality as a Delusion derives its justification from the experience of a superior reality, of an immortal ground of the mortal world."[36] In this sense, it is evident that there is not only mundane reality, the reality of finite objects in the world, but also eminent extra-mundane reality, the reality known in the experience of a movement of transcendence that reaches beyond the world.

Related to these dual modes of understanding of reality, Voegelin distinguishes between two types of scientific inquiry: the study of phenomena and the study of substances (including man in society and history).[37] Each

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[35] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.2, *The World of the Polis* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1957), pp.16-17. Hereafter *OH*, II.

[36] Ibid., p.216.

[37] E. Voegelin, "The Origins of Scientism," *Social research*, 15:4 (1948), pp.463.

type is, though distinct, valid because each is a proper way to know the particular aspect of reality which is its specific concern. "Inasmuch as political science includes both a phenomenal and a substantive component, its renewal only requires a defense against the scientistic attempt to disallow the rational examination of substance. Limited to its own sphere, therefore, phenomenal science is entirely appropriate."[38] But knowing reality only from an external perspective or from a science of phenomena, according to Voegelin, never penetrates to the essential substance, the ultimate experiential concreteness of the reality they attempt to explore.[39]

It is a mistake to insist that the arena of substance be studied through a science of phenomena. As Voegelin implies, the task of a science of substance can be achieved by the Greek tradition of philosophical speculation. As such the experiential and existential components of theoretical inquiry should be emphasized. As a science of substance, political theory necessarily begins with the concrete experience of a particular historical individual. A consciousness is the concrete consciousness of a concrete, specific and individual human being. Even though Voegelin admits that "few men can realistically hope to achieve the

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[38] J.L. Wiser, "Eric Voegelin: A Study in the Renewal of Political Science," *Polity*, 18:2 (Winter 1985), p.307.

[39] See, for example, E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.3, *Plato and Aristotle* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1957, hereafter *OH*, III, p.73; and *FETR*, p.115.

clarity and differentiation that characterize the philosopher's noetic insight, he does, nonetheless, believe that it is the natural condition of all men to experience, even if compactly, the divine ground of being."[40] The emphasis of *personal* experience as the epistemological basis for substantive inquiry into reality is precisely the reason why Voegelin's understanding of political theory fails to meet the critical standards of the phenomenal sciences. As traditionally interpreted, modern natural science (the science of phenomena) is characterized, in part, by its systematic attempt to replace personal knowledge with a universal and therefore abstract methodology of explanation.[41]

Thus, the substantial reality to which *episteme* can penetrate, and which the *doxai* do not reach, is the experience of "participation in being." The root of reality, which the philosopher comes to know epistemically, is nothing other than the tension of existence. To know this with full theoretical clarity is both to experience it as the ground of being and to recognize its directional character and its transcendental goal. The substance of reality is the luminous tension of existence, and the luminosity of this tension is what constitutes *episteme* or *theoria*. In other words, existential reality is not known through an objectifying "look" which could subject it to

[40] J.L. Wiser, "Eric Voegelin: A Study...," p. 306.

[41] Ibid.

cognitive mastery in the philodoxic mode, but only through the involvement of the whole person surrendering, entrusting, and committing himself to it in the philosophic mode. It appears that imagination, or delusion, "can cut loose from reality and produce the sets of images that we call Second Reality because they pretend to refer to reality though in fact they do not."[42] Voegelin states:

> A reality projected by imagination...is not the reality of common experience. Nevertheless, a man's act of deforming himself is as real as the man who commits it, and his act of projecting a Second Reality is as real as the First Reality it intends to hide from view. The imaginator, his act of imagination, and the effects the act has on himself as well as on other people, thus, can claim to be real.[43]

The reality that is discovered in the differentiating experiences is not homogeneous, but has an etiological and a directional structure. Thus, there are two modes of being, that of the visible, finite and temporal things, and that of the non-visible, infinite ground. The ground is experienced as being more real than the visibly existing things. There is a tension of temporal being toward the ground that manifests itself as an attraction and a search. The ground and the finite things are two tensionally related poles within one comprehensive reality. This comprehensive reality is experienced as engaged in a movement of "transcending itself in the direction of emergent truth."

[42] E. Voegelin, "The Eclipse of Reality," p.187.

[43] Ibid., p.186.

And man is a partner in this movement of reality toward consciousness.

However, it is an irony of history that a mode of existence which is actually highly imaginative or speculative--that of existence as known purely from without--has become widely accepted as the standard of reality, while that mode of existence man actually experiences in consciousness is treated as unreal.[44] The general conflict between the world of imagination and the real world comes from the discrepancy of contents between realities imagined and experienced, "through the act of projecting an imaginary reality, to the man who indulges in the act." To discern the discrepancy, Voegelin goes on to say:

> First, on the level of contents, a reality projected by imagination may deform or omit certain areas of reality experienced; reality projected, we may say, obscures or eclipses First Reality. Ascending from contents to the act, then, one can discern a man's intention to eclipse reality. This intention can become manifest in a large variety of forms, ranging from the straight lie concerning a fact to the subtler lie of arranging a context in such a manner that the omission of the fact will not be noticed; or from the construction of a system that, by its form, suggests its partial view as the whole of reality to its author's refusal to discuss the premises of the system in terms of reality experienced. Beyond the act, finally, we reach the actor, that is the man who has committed the act of deforming his humanity to a self and now lets the shrunken self eclipse his own full reality. He will deny his humanity and insist he is nothing but his shrunken self; he will deny ever having experienced the reality of common experience; he will deny that anybody could have a fuller perception of reality than he allows his self; in brief, he will set the contracted self as a model for himself as well as for everybody else. Moreover, his insistence on conformity will be

[44] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.143.

> aggressive--and in this aggressiveness there betrays itself the anxiety and alienation of the man who has lost contact with reality.[45]

As Voegelin indicates, "the conflict *with* reality turns out to be a disturbance *within* reality."[46] By an act of imagination, he writes, man can shrink himself to a self that is "condemned to be free." To this shrunken and contracted self, God is dead, the past is dead, the present is the flight from the self's nonessential facticity towards being what is not, the future is the field of possibles among which the self must choose its project of being beyond mere facticity, and freedom is the necessity of making a choice that will determine the self's own being.[47] The deformation of reality occurs when the balance of consciousness is lost. One of the fundamental concepts in Voegelin's theory is that of "the deformed consciousness that creates deformed symbolisms about the nature of reality...A deformed consciousness is a consciousness that deliberately distorts its appreciation of reality in order to deny man's ultimate ignorance of the nature of Being. Thus it creates symbols (like the gnostic and apocalyptic theories) that claim to provide complete and final knowledge

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[45] E. Voegelin, "The Eclipse of Reality," p.186.

[46] Ibid.

[47] D. Levy, *Realism*, pp.108-109.

of it. Thus, the ultimate source of deformation seems to be the *libido dominandi* of men."[48]

With regard to the reality existentially experienced the following section investigates Voegelin's theory of consciousness, whereas Voegelin's enunciation of modernity and gnosticism as an elaboration on the reality projected by imagination will be reviewed in the next chapter.

[48] Anibal A, Bueno, "Consciousness, Time and Transcendence in Eric Voegelin's Philosophy," in P.J. Opitz and G. Sebba, eds., *The Philosophy of Order* (Stuttgart: Ernst Klett, 1981), p.107.

2. THEORY OF CONSCIOUSNESS

As the theme of Voegelin's philosophical enterprise--human existence in society and history--discloses, "man, society and history" are fields of search which taken together constitute reality, especially political reality.[49] These three fields, "man," "society," and "history," refer to things that are not of the same order. It is important, therefore, to see in what manner Voegelin puts them together. In this and following sections of this chapter, thus, we shall see that Voegelin presents them as analogous and inter-connected dynamic structures or processes of reality, given life and meaning by an all-embracing process that transcends them as it encompasses them. No brief summary can do justice to his magnificent undertaking, elaborated over many years and set out in thousands of pages drawing on a great wealth of material. I will, however, try to review what seems to me the core of Voegelin's philosophy, by illustrating the theory of consciousness, theory of representation, and theory of history, respectively. Bound together, they constitute the essence of Voegelin's political philosophy and are inseparable parts of an investigation which is in itself part of man's search for reality.

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[49] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis: Zur Theorie der Geschichte und Politik* (Muenchen: R. Piper & Co., 1966), p.144.

From Ideas to Consciousness

Eric Voegelin began as a student of the history of political ideas. He had planned to write an introductory textbook on the history of political ideas using George H. Sabine's *A History of Political Theory* as his model. But he reached an impasse which made him decide to abandon the project when he worked through the sources and wrote over several thousand pages.

First, he was struck by the fact that "the conventional histories began with the Greeks, as if there had been nothing before them."[50] He found that the conventional principle of development from the Greeks through the Middle Ages, into the modern period broke down. The principle of selection of the historical materials was defective. It ignored the real development of spiritual and political freedoms through Judeo-Christianity, Augustine's "sacred history." Also, it ignored ancient civilizations predating the Greeks that were accessible to contemporary scholars through the comparative study of civilizations, attempted by Oswald Spengler, Arnold Toynbee, and available through the Chicago Oriental Institute's work on the Ancient Near East.

He also found that something was wrong with the concept of "ideas." He gradually realized that there was no such entity, except in a trivial sense. "Ideas are not entities in history; the real entities are societies, which express

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[50] G. Sebba, "Prelude and Variations on the Theme of Eric Voegelin," in E. Sandoz, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Thought* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982), p.15.

their existence in history through an enormously complex set of symbols."[51] The "ideas" were not speculation about political society, or more or less arbitrary inventions of gifted thinkers, or rationalizations of emotional attitudes and vested interests. In his "Autobiographical Memoir" Voegelin writes: "the conception of a history of ideas was an ideological deformation of reality. There were no ideas unless there were symbols of immediate experiences...No language symbol today can simply be accepted as a *bona fide* symbol, because the corruption has proceeded so far that everything is suspect."[52] Ideas are merely "a secondary conceptual development, beginning with the Stoics"; they transform experiences and their symbols into concepts that refer to a reality other than the true, experienced reality. "Hence, ideas are liable to deform the truth of the experiences and their symbolizations."[53]

Thus, Voegelin, who initiated his career as a teacher of jurisprudence at the University of Vienna, was led to philosophical speculation on account of an experience of the fragility of constitutional democracy in many European states after World War I. He perceived that institutions are founded on ideas, or symbols of self-interpretation

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[51] William Havard, "Voegelin's Changing Conception of History and Consciousness," in Stephen A. McKnight, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Search for Order in History* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1978), p.15.

[52] E. Voegelin, "Autobiographical Memoir," unpublished transcript of taped interviews with E. Sandoz in 1973, p.64; hereafter cited as AM.

[53] E. Voegelin, AM, p.75, cited in G. Sebba, "Prelude and Variations...," p.16.

shared by a people, and that if such interpretations are shattered, the institutions will be as well.

With this realization, consequently, Voegelin began his "inquiry into the variety of symbolic manifestations through which historical societies express their existence, the way in which these differing symbolic forms are related to one another, and the problem of discerning the extent to which the experiences symbolized approach reality and thereby provide a basis for order."[54] Thus, he began his life-long quest for the contours of political reality. This quest led him from analyzing the immediate context of the political struggle in concrete societies to searching the concepts that animated that struggle in an individual society, to the thought that grounded a particular civilization and, further, to the comprehensive structure of political symbols in the varied civilizations that have emerged in world history.

As his search expanded in scope and time, it also increased in depth; for the initiating and orienting concepts of civilization had to emerge from somewhere, and that "somewhere" was the depth of the consciousness of representative human beings. In this sense, it could be said that "the domain of 'empirical' political reality expanded from constitutions to the concepts that undergird them and, further, from these ideas to the experiences of participation in political and social reality of which the

[54] W. Havard, "Voegelin's Changing Conception...," p.15.

ideas were expressions and finally to the comparative study of experiences of order and disorder in the psyche of representative human types, the philosophers, sages, and prophets who have illumined the contours of the drama of humanity."[55]

That is, Voegelin evaluates political ideas and regimes on the basis of an understanding of the human condition deriving from a comparative study of symbols concerning spiritual order and disorder which have appeared over time. In fact, history may be characterized as a "trail of equivalent symbols in time and space," left by the process of moving presence of reality.[56] Voegelin's new insight into the connection between experience and reality had shifted the accent of his concern from symbols to the engendering experiences, i.e., toward the philosophy of consciousness and investigations into experiences of order and its symbolic expressions, into the institutions establish it--the political societies--and finally into the order of consciousness itself.

Indeed, the philosophy of consciousness is the core of Eric Voegelin's political theory. He became interested in the problems of consciousness in the 1920s, thus entering the philosophic domain of Edmund Husserl, Henri Bergson and William James. He writes, "[t]hat the poverty of political

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[55] K. Keulman, "The Balance of Consciousness," pp.41-42.

[56] E. Voegelin, "Equivalences of Experience and Symbolization in History," in *Eternia e Storia, voll, valori permanenti nel divenire storico* (Florence: Valechi, 1970), p.233.

science--through its immersion in neo-Kantian epistemology, value-related methodology, historicism, descriptive institutionalism and ideological historical speculations--could be overcome only with the help of a new philosophy of the consciousness was already clear to me during my twenties."[57] However, struck by the political disorder caused by the totalitarian political movements in the twentieth century, he found that the contemporary accounts of the nature of consciousness was unsatisfactory. The political disorder caused by the totalitarian movements in this century could only, according to him, be understood through an analysis of specific forms of human consciousness. Voegelin writes:

> I had arrived at a dead-end in my attempts to find a theory of man, society and history that would permit an adequate interpretation of the phenomena in my chosen field of studies. The analysis of the movements of Communism, Fascism, National Socialism, and racism, of constitutionalism, liberalism, and authoritarianism had made it clear beyond a doubt that at the center of a philosophy of politics had to be a theory of consciousness: but the academic institutions of the Western world, the various schools of philosophy, the rich manifold of methodologies, did not offer the intellectual instruments that would make the political events and movements intelligible.[58]

To quote Anibal Bueno's summary: "[Voegelin] rejected the materialistic and the idealistic theories, because the former could not explain the existence of consciousness, and

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[57] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.7.

[58] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (English), trans. & ed. by G. Niemeyer (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 1978), p.3.

the latter could not adequately account for the reality that transcends it."[59] Voegelin also objected to "stream theories of consciousness"[60] particularly Husserl's, "because they were not actual descriptions of the phenomena of consciousness, but speculative constructions."[61] The stream theories of consciousness "understood all knowledge of reality according to the model of knowledge of external objects, and neglected experiences of participation that are an important source of knowledge." And they "analyzed consciousness in general, as a type of entity whose nature could be determined by an abstract study of it."[62] Since consciousness is a necessarily ambiguous term, an analysis of consciousness should be discrete, as Voegelin writes:

> As far as consciousness is the site of participation, its reality partakes of both the divine and the human without being wholly the one or the other; as far as it is the sensorium of participation, it is definitely man's own, located in his body in spatio-temporal existence. Consciousness, thus, is both the time pole of the tension (sensorium) and the whole tension including its pole of the timeless (site). Our participation in the divine remains bound to the perspective of man. If the distinction between the two meanings of consciousness be neglected, there arises the danger of derailing into the divinization of man or the humanization of God.[63]

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[59] A.A. Bueno, "Consciousness, Time and...," p.91.

[60] Bueno defines stream theories as that "conceived consciousness as a stream of perceptions and carefully analyzed its temporal structure and its relation to the external world on this foundation."

[61] Ibid., p.91.

[62] Ibid., pp.91-92.

[63] E. Voegelin, "Immortality: Experience and Symbol," *Harvard Theological Review*, 60:3 (1967), p.275.

He also affirms:

> The reality of consciousness is not unconscious, but through symbolic expressions in various degrees of illumination it relates to reality, either to its own reality of participation [in existence], or in the poles of the participation. The images themselves thus are reality, the reality of consciousness, but they are not the reality to which they relate themselves in knowledge. Consciousness is always consciousness of something.[64]

Opposing the stream theories of consciousness, therefore, Voegelin situates philosophy firmly within the historical world and within the concrete existence of the philosopher. He analyzes that a human consciousness is a concrete process in which awareness of reality is formed by concrete experiences. That is, reality is a process that becomes luminous to itself in the concrete consciousness of concrete human beings.

Voegelin believes that the "problems of human order in society and history arise from the order of the consciousness. The philosophy of consciousness is therefore the core of a philosophy of politics."[65] In other words, "[t]he philosophy of order is the process in which we as men find the order of existence in the order of consciousness."[66] Thus, the most important epistemological task of political inquiry is to elucidate the nature of

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[64] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.307, English version, p.166.

[65] Ibid., (German), p.7.

[66] Ibid., p.11.

consciousness and its relationship to reality. For him, consciousness is a process that is aware of being a part of a comprehensive reality that constitutes it. That is, consciousness is the seat of human experience, the register of reality, "the specifically human mode of participation in reality." He states:

> To be conscious of something is an experiential process polarized by the cognitive tension between the knower and the known. The several meanings of reality can be made intelligible by going through the successful acts of reflection on the process of consciousness: If, in a first act of reflection on the process, we turn toward the pole of the known, the object of cognition will be the something we acknowledge as real. If, in a second act, we turn toward the pole of the knower, the human carrier of cognition as well as his images and language symbols referring to the known, will move into the position of the something to be acknowledged as real. And if, in a third act, we turn toward the experiential process and the cognitive tension as a whole, the process will become the something we acknowledge as real. Following the acts of reflection, the meaning of reality moves from the known to the knower and ultimately to the process that is structured by the participation of, and by the cognitive tension between the knower and the known in the experience. The consciousness of reality becomes a process within reality.[67]

As he states the basic issue:

> We have experience of our consciousness only qua consciousness, only as the process experienced from within, which is neither bodily nor material. The substantive unity of human existence, which must be accepted as [an] ontological hypothesis for the understanding of consciousness' basis in body and matter, is objectively inexperienceable. That does not mean, however, that there is no such thing. At any rate, the hypothesis is indispensable for grasping the "ensemble" of consciousness and bodily process in

[67] E. Voegelin, "The Eclipse of Reality," p.187.

> the total process of human existence. We cannot descriptively grasp "pure" consciousness as process; rather we can only interpretatively grasp a "human" consciousness as consciousness in the body and the world.[68]

Our fundamental pre-reflective experience is an awareness of participation in a larger territory of reality. But this experience is not a form of objective knowledge. There cannot be a separation between a knowing subject and a known object, because the subject is a part of the process of knowing itself. It is worth noting here that there is a different conception of experience between Voegelin's theory of consciousness and that of modern rationalism. The scope they attribute respectively to the experience reflected upon is fundamentally different. In modern rationalists' thought, the notion of experience is limited to sense data, and the operations by which the sense data are processed or rendered in mechanistic way.

On the contrary, Voegelin stresses the operations of consciousness and their experienced dynamism as themselves as important data for philosophical reflection. Thus, the scope of the experience is dramatically expanded beyond the limits of sensory perception and reflections on phenomenal regularities. As Sandoz writes, this implies "an epistemological revolution worthy of the name" because it implies that "*Truth* lies at the level of experience, not at the level of the propositions and symbolisms which

[68] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (English), p.31.

articulate its content."[69] This means that in the Voegelinian philosophical science of politics the entire range and modes of human experience become resources from which the knowledge of reality and its order may be drawn by way of noetic inquiry.

Experience and Symbolization

Voegelin's theory of consciousness is augmented by an argument on experience and symbolization. For man expresses his experiences of reality in language symbols, the study of these symbolizations provides an avenue to the understanding of reality. According to Voegelin, the experiential field of reality is construed as made up of individual entities which tend to be grouped into four categories: God and man, world and society.[70] The quaternarian structure of being indicates the range of the experiential field within which the inquiry to reality moves. Thus, even though the different realms of being have their autonomy, our knowledge of them is always affected by their relationship to the other constituents of the quaternarian structure of being. Accepting this, Voegelin attempts to trace the development of man's self-understanding of the structure of reality.

The quaternarian partners in reality and their structured relationship were a "datum of human experience"

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[69] E. Sandoz, "The Philosophical Science of Politics Beyond Bahavioralism," G.J. Graham, Jr. & G.W. Carey, eds., *The Post-Behavioral Era* (David McKay Co., 1972), p.298.

[70] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.1, *Israel and Revelation* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1956), p.1. Hereafter *OH*, I.

insofar as man could know them "by virtue of his participation in the mystery of being," but not in the sense that he could grasp them as "an object of the external world," or view them from some location that would permit him to fathom the mystery of the whole.[71] The quaternarian structure of being also supplies pertinent information about the meaning of experience and symbolization because reality is symbolized as a community of being articulated into the four-fold relationship by the symbols of God, man, world, and society.[72] Given the existential situation, man was engaged in a "process of symbolization" that was "the attempt at making the essentially unknowable order of being intelligible as far as possible through the creation of symbols which interpret the unknown by analogy with the reality, or supposedly, known."[73] Referring to God, man, world and society as the totality of things that the people of every age could see, Voegelin affirmed that "[t]he range of human experience is always present in the fullness of its dimensions."[74] But, Voegelin states that man could not discern all the complex relationships in his experiential field at once.[75] The activity of rendering experience

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[71] Ibid.

[72] E. Sandoz, "The Foundations of Voegelin's Political Theory," *The Political Science Reviewer*, 1 (Fall 1971), p.41.

[73] *OH*, I, p.5.

[74] Ibid., p.1.

[75] Ibid., p.3.

intelligible generally develops from compactness to differentiated modes: Voegelin contends that man's experience of reality moves from compact to more differentiated experiences, and thus what the sequence of symbolizations reveals is the development from compact to differentiated forms.[76]

From the matrix of experience a man gains partial understanding of the order of being and the obligations of existence. Yet human existence is paradoxical in the sense that man is thrown into and out of existence without knowing either the how or the why of it. Man's most fundamental experience is the anxiety-laden experience of the actor in a drama who knows neither his part nor the play nor indeed what exactly he himself is. "He is an actor playing a part in the drama of being and, through the brute fact of his existence, committed to play it without knowing what it is."[77] Voegelin holds that reality can only be known "from the perspective of participation in it."[78] "Participation in being, however, is not a partial involvement of man; he is engaged with the whole of his existence, for participation is existence itself...Man's partnership in being is the essence of his existence, and this essence depends on the whole, of which existence is a part."[79]

[76] On compact and differentiated symbolizations, see the "4. Theory of History" section in this Chapter, pp.312-325.

[77] *OH*, I, p.1.

[78] Ibid.

[79] Ibid.

However, since man is situated within the process rather than outside of it, he cannot discern its meaning as a whole. Moreover, this means that man can never know the whole, for being is not an external object that can be examined from the outside. The answer to the foundational questions of human existence remain opaque.

> Knowledge of the whole, however, is precluded by the identity of the knower with the partner, and ignorance of the whole precludes essential knowledge of the part. This situation of ignorance with regard to the decisive core of existence is more than disconcerting: it is profoundly disturbing, for from the depth of this ultimate ignorance wells up the anxiety of existence.[80]

Therefore, man is ultimately ignorant of the nature of reality. But this ignorance--"man's essential ignorance of himself and being, while a permanent attribute of existence, one given paradigmatic expression in the irony of Socratic ignorance"[81]--is not complete ignorance. For man can achieve "considerable knowledge about the order of being, and not the least part of that knowledge is the distinction between the knowable and the unknowable." Man's knowledge about the order of being, however, "comes late in the long-drawn-out process of experience and symbolization."[82] Yet it is not in the spirit of detached search for scientific truth that man seeks to render existence intelligible;

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[80] Ibid., p.2.

[81] E. Sandoz, "The Foundations of Voegelin's...," p.44.

[82] *OH*, I, pp.2-3.

rather it is out of the anxiety of a fall from being that he searches the texture of the experiential ground of consciousness to render existence itself meaningful.[83]

> The concern of man about the meaning of his existence in the field of being does not remain pent up in the tortures of anxiety, but can vent itself in the creation of symbols purporting to render intelligible the relations and tensions between the distinguishable terms of the field.[84]

The anxiety of existence, the mystery of being, and the horror of a fall from existence into the nothingness of non-existence, motivates the creation of symbols. Voegelin is concerned with man's existence in a political order and with the manner in which man has symbolized or represented the brute fact of this existence and of his attempts to come to grips with the meaning of man's existence on this earth, i.e., in the cosmos. The question, "why should a cosmos exist at all, if man can do no better than live in it as if he were not of it, in order to make his escape from the prison through death?" is the critical question that brings the mystery of reality into full view.[85] Voegelin states:

> There is a cosmos in which man participates by his existence; man is endowed with cognitive consciousness of the reality in which he is a partner; consciousness differentiates in a process called history; and in the process of history man discovers reality to be engaged

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[83] R. Sandoz, "Eric Voegelin and the Nature of Philosophy," *Modern Age*, 13:2 (Spring 1969), pp.155-156.

[84] *OH*, I, pp.1-2.

[85] *OH*, IV, p.19.

> in a movement toward the Beyond of its present structure.[86]

But the term "cosmos," as Webb indicates, could be easily misinterpreted. In Voegelin's discussion it does not refer, as it frequently does in modern usage, to what is sometimes called the "astrophysical universe" which tends to be a purely physical, basically materializing conception based on the assumption that reality as a whole is made up of world-immanent spatio-temporal entities. "Voegelin's own use of the term cosmos refers to its ancient use to designate a much larger conception of the wholeness of reality, including spiritual as well as physical dimensions."[87]

To be certain about this world, to be certain about his own role in maintaining the order of things, was a vital necessity and vital problem for man. Thus, Voegelin considers that man must continually seek the meaning of his existence in the divine ground of all being, which is a "spiritual absolute," ineffable in terms of discursive thought, but susceptible of being directly experienced and realized within the human soul. Man requires knowledge not only about how things are and how they work, but also about the unknown ground of being itself. Voegelin expressed his understanding in symbols created to render intelligible the relations and tensions between God and man, world and

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[86] Ibid.

[87] R. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.135.

society, within the limits of experience, and oriented by it. These symbols interpret the unknown in analogy to that which is known or believed to be known.

Voegelin writes that "man is able to engender symbols which express his experience of reality, of himself as the experiencing agent, and of his conscious experiencing as the action and passion of participating" in the reality. Again, he knows that the "symbols engendered (are) part of the reality they symbolize," but also realizes that the experience of reality cannot be whole or complete but has the character of a horizon.[88] Thus, man can never hope finally to possess knowledge of the reality in which he participates through existence precisely because this reality is in the process of movement, and also because reality is all-embracing whereas, man's participation therein can never be so. Summarizing his theory of symbolization in seven propositions in his essay, "Equivalence of Experience and Symbolization in History," Voegelin presents a useful approach to the understanding of reality.

1. Man participates in the process of reality. The implication of the fundamental proposition, then, can be expressed by the following propositions:
2. Man is conscious of reality as a process, of himself as being part of reality, and of his consciousness as a mode of participation in its process.
3. While consciously participating, man is able to engender symbols which express his experience of reality, of himself as the experiencing agent, and of his conscious experiencing as the action and

[88] E. Voegelin, "Equivalence of Experience and...," p.221.

passion of participating.

4. Man knows the symbols engendered to be part of the reality they symbolize--the symbols consciousness, experience, and symbolization denote the area where the process of reality becomes luminous to itself. To the positive statements we, finally, can add three corollaries of a cautionary nature:
5. Reality is not a given that could be observed from a vantage point outside itself but embraces the consciousness in which it becomes luminous.
6. The experience of reality cannot be total but has the character of a perspective.
7. The knowledge of reality conveyed by the symbols can never become a final possession of truth, for the luminous perspective that we call experience, as well as the symbols engendered by them, are part of reality in process.[89]

In-Between Reality and Existential Tension

In his "Autobiographical Memoir," Voegelin says that in formulating the conception of experience in his theory of consciousness, he was stimulated by William James' "radical empiricism" which he later discovered to be in line with Plato:

> At the center of consciousness I found the experience of participation, meaning thereby the reality of being in contact with reality outside myself...Among the philosophers I found important confirmation from the radical empiricism of William James. James's study on the question--"Does 'Consciousness' Exist?"(1904)--struck me at the time, and still strikes me, as one of the most important philosophical documents of the twentieth century. In developing his concept of the pure experience, William James has put his finger on the reality of the consciousness of participation, inasmuch as what he calls pure experience is the something that can be put into the context *either* of the subject's stream of consciousness *or* of objects in the external world. This fundamental insight of William James identifies the something that lies between the subject and object of participation as the experience. Later I found that the same type of

[89] Ibid.

> analysis had been conducted on a much vaster scale by Plato, resulting in his concept of the *metaxy*, the In-Between. The experience is neither in the subject nor in the world of objects but In-Between, and that means In-Between the poles of man and the reality he experiences...A good number of problems which plague the history of philosophy now become clear, as hypostases of the poles of a pure experience in the sense of William James, or of the *metaxy* experiences of Plato. By hypostases I mean the fallacious assumption that the poles of the participatory experience are self-contained entities that form a mysterious contact on occasion of an experience.[90]

It was on the basis of these considerations that Voegelin said he developed his own conception of how consciousness can best be interpreted:

> The term *consciousness*...could no longer mean to me a human consciousness which is conscious of a reality outside man's consciousness, but had to mean the In-Between reality of the participatory pure experience which then analytically can be characterized through such terms as the poles of the experiential tension and the reality of the experiential tension in the *metaxy*.[91]

In Voegelin's later writings the Platonic and Christian experiences become essential for understanding political reality. Along with the discovery of the soul, Voegelin contends that Plato differentiated the *metaxy* or In-Between structure of reality. Voegelin's symbolism for the experience of human existence as participation in being is that of Plato's *metaxy*. Human existence was, according to Plato, not that of God nor that of animals, it fell

[90] AM. Quoted in E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution* (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1981), p.170.

[91] Quoted in E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.171.

somewhere in-between. Thus, man's soul is in tension toward the ground of being, which Voegelin describes as the:

> ...tension between life and death, immortality and mortality, perfection and imperfection, time and timelessness; between order and disorder, truth and untruth, sense and senselessness of existence; between *amor Dei* and *amor sui*, *l'ame ouverte* and *l'ame close*; between the virtues of openness toward the ground of being such as faith, love, and hope, and the vices of infolding closure such as hybris and revolt; between the moods of joy and despair; and between alienation in its double meaning of alienation from the world and alienation from God.[92]

In the Christian experience another structure was articulated into the field of reality. Voegelin calls this "eschatological consciousness" or the "transfiguration of reality." At any rate, man's existence is not a fact, but a movement in the *metaxy*, a struggle between light and darkness, between open participation and closure against reality. Human consciousness both inclines and has power to transcend its particular spatio-temporal existence and the particular society, things, and times: it is "capable of infinity" even though dependent on a particular human body. Thus, as Levy writes, "consciousness is a finite event in a transfinite process of reality."[93] The limitation of knowledge by mystery flows from this for, as Voegelin writes, "[t]here is psyche deeper than consciousness, and

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[92] E. Voegelin, "Equivalences of Experience and...," p.220.

[93] D. Levy, *Realism*, p.49.

there is reality deeper than reality experienced, but there is no consciousness deeper than consciousness."[94]

Voegelin states that consciousness has a specific content. His theory of consciousness is situated firmly within the historical world and within the concrete existence of the philosopher. He analyzes that a human consciousness is a concrete process in which awareness of reality is formed by concrete experiences. That is, reality is a process that becomes luminous to itself in the concrete consciousness of concrete human beings, even though human consciousness is not the perfect luminosity of being that lies in the direction of a state beyond this world, the Platonic *epekeina*, the Beyond. Since a consciousness is a concrete individual process, any truth about the nature of consciousness in the abstract must first be true in the consciousness of a concrete individual.

> Inasmuch as the consciousness of philosophizing is no "pure" consciousness but rather the consciousness of a human being, all philosophizing is an event in the philosopher's life history--further an event in the history of the community with its symbolic language; further in the history of mankind, and further in the history of the cosmos...the systematic reflection on consciousness is a late event in the biography of the philosopher. The philosopher always lives in the context of his own history, the history of a human existence in the community and in the world.[95]

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[94] E. Voegelin, "Equivalences of Experiences and...," p.228.

[95] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.33.

This conviction led him to undertake an anamnetic experiment in order to clarify the constitution of his own philosophizing consciousness. For Voegelin *anamnesis*, or memory, as it was for Plato, points toward the historical past, but also inward and downward--into the depths of the historical present.[96] In this sense, according to Voegelin, history and philosophy mutually constitute one another.[97] That is, history is a philosophical inquiry, and philosophy is intrinsically historical in structure. In Webb's words, "[h]istorical inquiry...is an exploration not only of past events and their interrelations but also of the structure of human existence as a process of participation in being. This means that history as a study is in its essential character a philosophical discipline. Similarly, to Voegelin philosophy itself is a process of reflection in which the structure of human existence and its historical character become conscious."[98] Since Voegelin builds his theory on the foundation supplied by Plato, it is appropriate to look at Plato's symbolism about anamnesis.

Plato expressed his own philosophy of consciousness in terms of the symbolism of recollection.[99] Plato appears to have coined the word *anamnesis* from *mnemosyne* (memory or

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[96] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.17.

[97] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.133.

[98] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.17.

[99] On the account of anamnesis, I am indebted to Dr. Sandoz. See E. Sandoz, "The Foundations of Voegelin's...," pp.38-39.

remembrance; mythically, the Mother of the Muses); its meaning is remembering-again, recollection, or reminiscence. Anamnesis is one of the modes of consciousness. Plato's symbolism of anamnesis provided an opportunity to solve the serious epistemological problem, i.e., how does one know the truth or reality.

> What is remembered...is what has been forgotten; and the troublesome task of recollecting the forgotten must be assayed because it should not remain forgotten. Through recollection of the forgotten that which ought to be remembered is brought to the present of knowledge; and the tension to knowledge shows forgottenness to be the situation of not-knowing, the ignorance (*agnoia*) of the soul in Plato's sense. Knowledge and not-knowing are situations of existential order and disorder. What is forgotten can, however, only be remembered because it is a knowledge in the mode of forgottenness that through its presence in forgottenness stirs existential discontent in the man, and this discontent presses toward conscious knowledge. From the mode of forgottenness recollection retrieves what ought to be known into the present in the mode of knowledge. Recollection is, therefore, the activity of the consciousness through forgottenness; and this means that the latent knowledge of the unconsciousness is aroused through recollection and returned in an observable manner into specific presence in consciousness, there to be articulated. This articulation is, then, in turn, 'fixed' through language by the assertion in consciousness of linguistic images of the content of the previously forgotten and inarticulate knowledge. Lastly, whether the recollection proceeds out of the resources of strictly autobiographical experiences or out of the meditation of the historiographic evinced experiences of men of distant generations, what is recollected that preeminently ought to be known and not remain forgotten is the source of man's humanity and the order of society and history in participating attunement to the divine reality which is the Ground.[100]

[100] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.11; E. Sandoz, "The Foundations of Voegelin's...," pp.69-70.

Truth in Greek, *aletheia*, itself also connotes an self-disclosure of being, unhiddenness, uncovering, unconcealing, or unforgetting. Therefore, the opposite of *aletheia* in the existential sense is not falsehood or inaccuracy, as in the case of an opinion, but eclipse, the darkening of reality through existential closure. The existence that becomes open in the uncovering of existential truth is conscious existence. Plato etymologically designates *aletheia* as "an agglomeration of *Theia ale* (divine wandering), implying the divine motion of existence" (*Cratylus* 421B; cf. 411A-413C). "The experience of dejavu or anamnesis not only is offered as evidence of the immortality of the soul and of metempsychosis by Plato; but it is also the sign of essential humanity itself and is equated with intuitive or noetic reason (*nous*): that mysterious divine something in man, the highest rational faculty or capacity of intellect whereby the transcendental Ideas and undemonstrable First Principles of scientific knowledge are, through participation, grasped and known."[101] Anamnesis is identified with or at least closely allied to noetic reason, for "all inquiry and all learning is but recollection."[102]

In Aristotelian terms, the adequate analysis of human existence must take into account both the synthetic and the specific nature of man: Man participates in all realms of being, from the inorganic to the divine but he is also

[101] E. Sandoz, "The Foundations of Voegelin's...," pp.39-40.

[102] Plato, *Meno*, 81E.

distinguished from other living being as an *animal rationale*, as a being endowed with reason. Therefore, though a specifically human existence is ordered by means of the *nous* or *ratio*, what is put in order is not consciousness alone, but the whole passionate and corporeal human existence in question. "There is no In-Between of existence as a self-contained object but only existence experienced as part of reality which extends beyond the In-Between."[103]

> Human existence, it appears, is not opaque to itself, but illuminated by intellect (Aquinas) or *nous* (Aristotle). This intellect is as much part of human existence as it is the instrument of its interpretation. In the exegesis of existence intellect discovers itself in the structure of existence; ontologically speaking, human existence has noetic structure.[104]

The noetic interpretation of reality, central to Voegelin's political theory, consists at the first level of man in just such an analysis of the structure of human existence under the guidance of the ordering *nous*. The analysis is then existential in a double sense: it is an exploration and at the same time a rational constitution of the structure of existence being explored.[105] It is the only experience that is strictly one's own, the only process

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[103] E. Voegelin, "The Gospel and Culture," in Donald G. Miller & Dikran Y. Hadidian, eds., *Jesus and Man's Hope*, vol.2. (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary Press, 1971), p.76.

[104] E. Voegelin, "On Debate and Existence," pp.146-147.

[105] Athanasios Moulakis, "Political Reality and History in the Work of Eric Voegelin," in A. Moulakis, ed., *The Promise of History: Essays in Political Philosophy* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1986), p.121.

of reality that one knows from inside.[106] Noesis, the activity of *nous*, is a struggle to illuminate a movement of the soul in which one is passionately caught up:

> The noetic exegesis lifts the logos [the intelligible structure] of participation into the light of consciousness by interpreting the noetic experience of participation. Noetic knowledge, therefore, is not abstract knowledge obtained by gathering cases of participation and examining them for general characteristics. Rather, it is concrete knowledge of participation in which a man's desire for knowledge is experienced as a movement toward the ground that is being moved by the ground.[107]

From this point of view, *nous*, as a symbol, is virtually equivalent to philosophy as Voegelin considers ancient Greek thinkers to have understood it. Both symbols, philosophy and *nous* were born of and represent the same experientially grounded process in which reflective consciousness emerges from the womb of mythic thought. As we have already seen, philosophy is the activity by which the consciousness, aware of its fundamental ignorance respecting the ground of Being, strives to illumine the human situation, experienced as tension between the demands of world-immanent existence and the possibility of attunement with the divine ground.[108] Voegelin writes:

> For philosophy as a symbolic form is distinguished from myth and history by its reflective self-consciousness.

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[106] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), p.44.

[107] Ibid., p.183.

[108] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's *Anamnesis*," *Southern Review*, N.S., 7:1 (Winter 1971), p.76.

> What philosophy is, need not be ascertained by talking *about* philosophy discursively; it can, and must, be determined by entering *into* the speculative process in which the thinker explicates his experience of order. The philosophers' conscious break with the form of the myth occurred about 500 B.C. The individual steps taken toward a differentiated experience of the psyche, during the two centuries after Hesiod, had the cumulative result of letting the self-conscious soul emerge as the tentative source of order in competition with the myth, as well as with the aristocratic culture of the archaic polis.[109]

For Voegelin, philosophy is not a body of ideas or opinions, "but a man's responsive pursuit of his questioning unrest to the divine source that has aroused it." This takes place as a process of experience and symbolization that together constitute the characteristic activity of *nous* and its mode of knowing, *episteme*. What is supposed to be the characteristic activity of *nous* is precisely the experience of tension toward the ground and the awareness of a possible participation by the human in the divine *nous*. The term ground in Greek, *aition*, means the ground of existence of man and of other things.[110] The ground of existence, especially in the Aristotelian philosophy, is the *nous*: reason or spirit or intellect. In this sense, reason is the ground of existence for man, and especially the

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[109] *OH*, II, p.170.

[110] The term *aition*, which occurs in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, has two more meanings. One sense is that which in physics we call "cause"; and, the second is something different from "the cause" but can be translated into Latin as the doctrine of four *causae*: the *causa materialis*, the *causa formalis*, the *causa efficiens*, and the *causa finalis*. See E. Voegelin, *Conversation with Eric Voegelin*, ed., by Eric O'Connor, S.J. (Montreal: Thomas More Institute, 1980), pp.3-4.

ground for everything rational in his action.[111] The ground of existence which is divine is an experienced reality of a transcendent nature towards which one lives in a tension. Thus, the experience of the tension towards transcendent being is the experiential basis for all analysis in such matters. For the expression of this tension, a vocabulary has been developed:

> Already Heraclitus knew three variants or nuances of the tension: love, hope and faith. Where love towards a Divine Being is experienced, where hope for fulfillment in relation to such a Being is experienced as the point of orientation in life--where these experiences are present, there is the openness of the soul in existence which is an orienting center in the life of man. The vocabulary of love, hope and faith has remained in St. Paul: the *Letter to Romans*, for example, has those three names for the tension experienced. They are summarized in that openness of the soul which St. Augustine has called *amor dei* (the love of God) or which Bergson in his *Les Deux Sources de la morale et de la religion* has called the openness of the soul towards transcendence--which means openness towards the ground of existence, because we all experience our own existence as not existing out of itself but as coming from somewhere even if we don't know from where.[112]

However, such a tension means a participation in the Divine Being because we are engaged in tension toward it by the psyche. The term psyche is ontologically "the sensorium of transcendence," an organ of man by which he experiences

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[111] It should be noted that the meaning of the rationality of action in Aristotelian ethics and politics differs from that of modern secularized civilization. The ground for the rationality of action in Aristotelian philosophy is the transcendent divine ground. However, in our rather secularized civilization--an "enlightened" civilization since the eighteenth century--we mean primarily by "rationality of action," rationality in coordinating means to an end. See ibid., p.4.

[112] Ibid., pp.8-9.

or in which he experiences the various tensions. And the human psyche refers to the entire process of participation in reality, its symbolization, and the tension that moves and guides the process. And insofar as it is engaged in such experiences, the psyche can be called the "noetic" self, "noetic" being derived from *nous*. *Nous*, however, is not a part of the psyche; rather it is psyche raised to self-reflective clarity.

3. THEORY OF REPRESENTATION

Society and Representation

For Voegelin, as we have already witnessed, political science, or rather rigorously, political philosophy is a discipline that deals architectonically with the whole of human existence in political community and covers all aspects that deal with man's essential humanity. Man, as a communal existence, must structure political institutions that will regulate the formal, public relations between individuals and groups.

Men belong together as fellow participants in a society which is both finite and simultaneously transfinite being. Society is finite in the sense that it rises and falls; but it is transfinite in that it, as a participatory whole, transcends the individual member's existence. "Societies do not merely encompass other members but they also antedate and/or outlast individual men."[113] Participation in a society has been and can be symbolically expressed. Men give symbolic expression to the recognition of their communal existence in a political order. That is, the human beings who inhabit the political order continually create and maintain the symbols of meanings as both the mode and the condition of their self-realization. The symbolism forms the time-bound parameters of society and also conditions the relations between the individual members of

[113] A. Moulakis, "Political Reality and History...," p.125.

the group and the relations of the individual with the illuminated whole of the existing political reality. Therefore, the symbols and institutions must represent both the reality of human existence and the order in which this existence is encompassed and, at the same time, must form a mediating structure between the two poles of existence--man and God.

Voegelin uses a conception, "representation" refering to the way in which a society represents itself symbolically in order to establish its existence in history. For him, the nature of representation is the "form by which a political society gains existence for action in history."[114] To represent itself as ready for action in the political sphere, a society creates political institutions and symbols which reflect the society's attempt to create an order that will give meaning to the fact of its existence as a concrete political entity. The political order itself is the expression of the political existence of the society and the symbols and institutions are those that express and represent the political order. The symbols and institutions are intended as a more or less adequate representation of the society's self-interpretation and enable it to act in the political sphere.

In short, behind the political institutions of every society there are certain conceptions which those institutions are supposed to represent. And they are truly

[114] *NSP*, p.1.

representative only so long as they realize those conceptions. Every society seeks by self-interpretation to discover the meaning of its existence and tries, moreover, to relate this meaning to ultimate reality. Thus society is like a little world--a cosmion--that deliberately sets out to illuminate itself with meaning from within itself. To put it in Voegelin's words, "[s]ociety was a cosmion of meaning, illuminated from within by its own self-interpretation."[115] Voegelin writes:

> All the early empires, Near Eastern as well as Far Eastern, understood themselves as representatives of a transcendent order, of the order of the cosmos; and some even understood this order as a "truth." Whether one turns to the earliest Chinese sources in the *Shu King* or to the inscriptions of Egypt, Babylonia, Assyria, or Persia, one uniformly finds the order of the empire interpreted as a representation of cosmic order in the medium of human society. The empire is a cosmic analogue, a little world reflecting the order of the great, comprehensive world. Rulership becomes the task of securing the order of society in harmony with cosmic order.[116]

Voegelin's examination of the primary experience of human political existence--the perceived analogy between the ordered hierarchy of the cosmos and the hierarchy of the mediating political structure of the mesocosm--is centered around the understanding of the meaning of order as it has appeared in the various political societies of the past. In explaining Voegelin's theory of society, Moulakis writes

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[115] Ibid., p.52.

[116] Ibid., p.54.

that "societies are seen to express, however imperfectly, a sense of transfinite order, and...it is precisely the institutional and symbolic expression of this experience of order which holds societies together. We see concrete finite societies existing or having existed in time as mythically constituted entities."[117] Voegelin designates each historical differentiation in the modes of the search for meaning, as was expressed in the various forms of the political societies of the past, a "leap in being." Each of the historical leaps was accompanied by an analogous political order, so that the cosmological myth of antiquity forms the religio-political model for the mesocosm, which is the mediating political structure between gods and men.

In the undifferentiated compact world of antiquity (i.e., Egypt and Mesopotamia), religious institutions were also political institutions, and mythic rites had a political or social dimension. Pharaoh is the man who symbolizes the organic juncture between the gods of the cosmic order and the political realm, and, in his person he represents the order of the political reality. This compact experience is now lost in general in the mists of time and probably consisted of the genesis of political communities. The first leap was the revelation to Israel of the transcendent God by Himself, whose order was also revealed through His revelation of Himself as separate from His creation and His delineation of Himself as the true *telos*

[117] A. Moulakis, "Political Reality and History...," p.125.

for man. The Israelite order of revelation has the concomitant Kingdom of God as its political expression. And when the apocalyptic attempt is made to realize this kingdom on earth, the Israelite order compounds with the cosmic myth to form the Kingdom of Israel. The second leap was the Hellenic discovery of the order of wisdom which is symbolized in philosophy. The order of wisdom, expressed through philosophy, makes the individual who has attained knowledge of the ultimate reality that is the *Agathon* (the idea of Good) into the analogue of the polis through the anthropological principle that the polis is the man writ large.[118]

These symbolic forms of history--in various stages of compactness and differentiation of the symbolic political constructs--gave meaning to the fact of the existence of the society in reality and made for each individual member of that society a complete explanation of his existence within the boundaries or limits of that society's representation of itself. However, when one says that a society creates symbols to express its experience of order and therewith constitutes itself as a society, it does not mean that society is to be taken as a subject with a consciousness and a capacity to interpret it with the help of symbols. Voegelin's position with regard to this point is that experiences of order and their symbolic expression are "not

[118] The historical differentiations in the modes of the search for meaning in the symbolic forms of history, designated by Voegelin "the leaps in being," will be reviewed more in detail in the next section, titled "Theory of History."

the products of societies or cultures, but rather constitutive of these societies and cultures."[119] According to Voegelin, as mentioned earlier, there can be no experience of any consciousness other than that of concrete human beings. "Constructions such as a 'collective consciousness' of a society, of humanity etc. are but hypostatic figments of the mind."[120] The reality of the political order originally was engendered by the attempt to understand human existence and to express this understanding institutionally.

On the contrary, however, when the term reality is qualified by an adjective, such as political, this usually seems to be a reality of man's own making and of which he also has or derives experience. At some time in the distant past of antiquity, man facing the cosmos in its compact, unselfconscious, or undifferentiated mode saw the mystery of the whole with awed consciousness and bent his will to create an analogous institutional structure to that which was not of his making. But the mesocosm was, and was not, of man's making; it was of man's making, insofar as the unselfconscious and undifferentiated consciousness followed what was seen to be a natural pattern already existing in the order of the cosmos; but it was not of man's making, in that the mesocosm was patterned after a model devised by the unknown source of the ordered cosmos for man to imitate

[119] A. Moulakis, "Political Reality and History...," p.125.

[120] Ibid.

(*mimesis*). Thus, political reality in the form of mesocosm that represents the organic juncture between man and gods was a natural outgrowth of the cosmic myth. And men were born into the political order that represents a historical present.

This illumination is an essential part of man's political existence within an order, and it is the single fact with which any political inquiry must begin. Thus, a theory of politics must start with an understanding of the rich body of self-interpretation of a society and proceed from there by means of a critical evaluation and clarification of the symbolism that explains the society to itself and to others before it can create an understanding of the symbols of political order.

Representation and Articulation

Voegelin's theory of representation in terms of symbolic forms can be divided into three categories: elemental representation, existential representation, and articulation.[121] Representation in the elemental sense includes such major processes as the choice of a chief executive; the election of the members of a legislature by popular vote; the choice of a chief executive; the relations between the executive and legislative branches of government

[121] In summarizing Voegelin's theory of representation, especially regarding to representation in elemental and existential senses and articulation, I am indebted to Hans Aufricht, "A Restatement of Political Theory: A Note on Voegelin's The New Science of Politics," S.A. McKnight, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Search for Order in History*, pp.47-50.

and the relation of both to the judiciary; the frequency of elections; the role of parties in the election process; and the process of legislation itself, etc. The observance of these electoral processes and political activities do not "automatically provide the desired substance" of the symbolic form,[122] no matter what the nature of the representatives and of the represented, and of the principles by which both are guided in their decisions. It is because these processes cover only the external realization of one special type of articulation and representation. In order to be truly representative it is not sufficient for any government to be representative in the elemental sense, or in the constitutional sense; it must also be "representative in the existential sense of realizing the idea of the institution"[123] in terms of the state's own interpretation of the meaning of its concrete existence as one state among many.

The principle perhaps can be clarified at a practical level by noting that there is a question, for example, as to whether the government of the Soviet Union is representative in the elemental sense. There seems to be little doubt that the Soviet government possesses the outward form of representative institutions as a state. But there is some doubt as to whether its constitution and elections are genuine when compared to, say, the American or the British

[122] *NSP*, p.35.

[123] Ibid., p.51.

constitutions and elections. Furthermore, there arises a question of whether the Soviet government is meaningful in that it truly represents the Russian people. But, while there "may be radical disagreement on whether the Soviet government represents the people, there can be no doubt whatsoever that the Soviet government represents the Soviet society as a political society in form for action in history."[124]

Viewed from the Voegelin's perspective, "existential representation and not elemental representation is the real test of the viability of representative institutions."[125] Failure to distinguish between the two forms of representation in the practice of states may lead, and actually has led, to a misunderstanding about the form and meaning of order and to domestic and international disorder. Such disorder is likely to occur when a state makes a policy decisions that spread "representative institutions in the elemental sense to areas where the existential conditions for their functioning"[126] are absent. "In political theory and practice the question of 'who represents whom' frequently arises. Voegelin illustrates the increase in the number of persons who are eligible to be representatives *inter alia* by reference to English political history."[127]

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[124] Ibid., p.37.

[125] H. Aufricht, "A Restatement of Political Theory," p.47.

[126] *NSP*, p.51.

[127] H. Aufricht, "A Restatement of Political Theory," p.47.

In the first instance, the king was the only symbol of the existential order of the realm; in his person he was the realm and often was called "England." Later, there was an extension in the actual number of individuals who were called upon to represent the order of the realm in that the King-in-Council came to personify the realm of England. And, finally, it was the King-in-Parliament that now represents the realm as an entity ready for action in the political sphere. That is, a society can exist only when it has some form of tangible representative to act for it and in its name.

Voegelin's articulation of the notion of existential representation shows that the symbolism of the representation of the people must be articulated by determining the number of persons who shall act as representatives and the people who constitute the representable units. "[I]n the course of history, the range of people who are being represented has in many countries been widened until virtually all members of a political entity have become politically articulate."[128] Voegelin designates the emergence of new representative and representable units of society as "articulation." A society articulates itself in a twofold sense: it determines the person or persons who will act for it as representatives, and it determines the persons who constitute the representable units. Articulation thus is prerequisite of

[128] Ibid., p.48.

or prior to representation and is a momentary end-point of a historical process through which the members of a society structure that society for action.[129] The limit of articulation is the clarified symbolism of existence in political reality, and, more important, of the individual consciousness of both symbolism and articulation. Voegelin notes that to be

> conscious of something is an experiential process polarized by the cognitive tension between the knower and the known. The several meanings of reality can be made intelligible by going through the successive acts of reflection on the process of consciousness. If, in a first act of reflection on the process, we turn toward the pole of the known, the object of cognition will be something we acknowledge as real. If, in a second act, we turn toward the pole of the knower, the human carrier of cognition as well as his images and language symbols refering to the known, will move into the position of the something acknowledged to be real. And if, in a third act, we turn toward the experiential process and the cognitive tension as a whole, the process will become something we acknowledge to be real. Following the acts of reflection, the meaning of reality moves from the known to the knower and ultimately to the process that is structured by the participation of, and by the cognitive tension between the knower and the known in the experience.[130]

In knowing both symbolism and its expression within the political order that he inhabits the knower partakes of the existence of his society as a unit that requires representation, and the extension of representation to each unit is the end-point of articulation. The whole that is known as representation presents the final form of truth for

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[129] Ibid.

[130] E. Voegelin, "The Eclipse of Reality," p.187.

a particular society, where the existential representation of the society is also the representative of truth.[131]

Another critical criterion of representation is, according to Voegelin, transcendental representation, or, more accurately, representation of a transcendental truth. Voegelin points out that any society understands itself representing a transcendental truth, and that the concept of representation in the existential sense is to be supplemented by the principle of representation of truth. Thus, the existential representative of a society is at the same time "its active leader in the representation of truth."[132] Wherever there is government by consent, i.e., if elemental representation by consent is present, it is assumed that the active citizens participate in the representation of an existence in truth. While the articulation of society determines "who represents whom," the issues relating to the representation of truth center on the question of "who represents what"--i.e., who represents the true meaning of man in society. What is relevant here is, therefore, the question of what is truth. Here we need to look at the Voegelin's consideration of the Platonic and Aristotelian insights of representation and truth.

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[131] *NSP*, p.75.

[132] Ibid.

The Classical Insights of Representation

In relation to the theme of representation, Voegelin views that a political society rests on two principles that have been formulated by Plato: (1) the "anthropological principle," which means that every society reflects the type of men of whom it is composed;[133] and (2) the "theological principle," which implies that "God is the Measure"[134] rather than that "Man is the Measure." In elucidating the symbolism of society and representation the anthropological principle and the theological principle are mutually supplementary symbols; they bound together constitute standards, originally set forth by Plato and Aristotle.

The Platonic and Aristotelian insights are concerned mainly with the anthropocentric shift in emphasis that was inaugurated by Socrates. This shift was from the study of nature to the study of man as the center of his own existence, and the Platonic discovery of the political order of any community as the analogue of the order within the soul of the man who had attuned himself to the order of transcendent reality, and, as such was the measure and the standard of the political community and its societal order.

Plato's anthropological principle is that order in the cosmos, the polis and the souls of individual men is interdependent and organically whole: "The order of man and

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[133] Plato, *Republic*, 368C-D.

[134] Plato, *Laws*, 716C.

society is part of the embracing cosmic order."[135] Therefore, society is man written large, and "The soul is a one-man polis and man is the 'statesman' who watches over its constitution."[136] Plato's insight is that the polis is the individual writ large and that, in its existential order, a political society reflects that order in terms of the psyche of the highest type of human being. Although existentially the state is more powerful and can deport or kill the individual, on a different level, the individual can prevail over the state. For example, Solzhenitsyn, through his person and his work, more adequately embodies some truths of human existence than does the contemporary Soviet state. He is a representative of human existence in the Soviet society.

For Plato, *politeia* refers not only to an institutional pattern, such as a particular regime, but also to the good order, or constitution, within the souls of the leading philosophers. The division and distinction that Plato makes between the various civic virtues of a political order is reflected also in the virtues of the societal elements that make up a society.[137] Each element must possess

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[135] *OH*, I, p.51.

[136] Ibid., p.92.

[137] Here we need to consider Plato's theory of human nature. His theory of human nature starts with an analysis of justice and injustice. Plato holds that every man is composed of two different ingredients: body and soul. Justice and injustice are in the soul just as health and disease are in the body. Health is defined as the establishment of an order by nature among the parts of the body; disease as a disturbance of the natural order of rule and subordination among the parts. Justice is thus the establishment of an order by nature in the soul in such a manner that each part of the various parts of the soul fulfills its own function and does not interfere with the function of the other parts. The human soul can be divided into three parts: what Plato called the "rational

predominantly the particular virtue that is characteristic of the element, as soldiers must possess, above all other virtues, the virtue of courage so that they may defend the political order against its enemies.

In relation to the theological principle, Plato flatly contended that the proper study of mankind is God. No man is ever perfectly just; only God is. Likewise, no man is ever the transcendental Truth itself; only God is. Thus, man cannot be the measure (*metretike*) of all things as Protagoras asserted. But, as says Voegelin, "[t]he truth of man and the truth of God are inseparably one. Man will be in truth of his existence when he has opened his psyche to the truth of God."[138] Since man's experience of reality occurs mainly in relation to man's self-understanding of God, man's awareness of participation in a wider and greater reality generates insights and their symbolic expressions that constitute his order of existence. The movement of man's self-awareness occurs as an aspect of the movement of man's God-awareness. Thus, in discovering his lack of knowledge man actually come closer to God, the divine

element," the "spirited element," and the "appetitive element." The rational element is that part of a man's soul which enables him to reason, to deliberate and so forth. The spirited element is what makes a man courageous or cowardly, and the appetitive element consists of his desires and passions, such as the desire for food, drink, sex and so on. In terms of this hierarchical three-fold division of the soul, Plato argued that it is just when or if the three parts of the soul function harmoniously. Justice is that disposition of the well-ordered soul by nature of which each part fulfills its proper function. Justice is therefore a state or condition in which all parts of a whole are rightly related to each other and working harmoniously together to achieve the common end. Each part is doing its own business--not the "my own thing" of current parlance, but what each is supposed to be doing according to nature. That is, each is doing what it was made to do, or what it needs to do if the whole is to be saved. See, Plato, *Republic*, Book IV, 427-444.

[138] *NSP*, p.69.

reality. In ascending from the realm of shadows to the realm of ideas and ultimately to the vision of the *agathon* itself, man actually achieves the transcendental constitution of the soul. As an object of becoming, human beings become to discern and realize what is good and what is evil. Therefore, even though man himself cannot be the measure of anything, man who has experienced and realized the ultimate reality of the beyond can be the measure of society, of political order. The Platonic anthropological principle and theological principle bound together imply that man "can be the measure of society because God is the measure of his soul."[139] In other words, because the Beyond of all mundane existence is the source and standard of order within the soul of man, the man who has experienced and realized the ultimate reality of the Beyond is the measure of political order and human existence. The truth of God will become manifest in history to the extent that man's psyche is capable of grasping the truth of the divine, eternal world rather than that of the phenomenal world.

The philosopher who has the experience of the ultimate reality of the *agathon* is the measure of all political institutions because, within the complex of his experience of the *agathon*, he has formed "his character into habitual actualization of the dianoetic and ethical virtues" and thus is capable of the "imaginative re-enactment of the

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[139] Ibid., p.70.

experience of which theory is an explication."[140] To this type of man, Plato transferred the authority of the political order of polis because the philosopher has attained the serenity of spiritual order within his soul and thus is able to pronounce on existential matters with the authority of knowledge of what is good both for the individual and for his society, thus covering both the private and the public orders of the individual and his political order. Voegelin remarks that, surprising as this transfer of authority may seem to many, "Plato's claim has proved historically quite sound. The order represented by Callicles has gone down in ignominy: the order represented by Plato has survived Athens and is still one of the most important ingredients in the order of the soul of those men who have not renounced the tradition of Western civilization."[141] Plato's cardinal conviction underscores his perception of the greatness and achievement of Socrates: "The order of the soul as revealed through Socrates has, indeed, become the new order of relations between God and man."[142]

Aristotle's anthropology is very close to that of Plato. For Aristotle the true nature of man in order is to achieve the highest good or happiness, *eudaimonia*. The good of man is the function of his soul in accordance with its

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[140] Ibid., p.67.

[141] *OH*, III, p.39.

[142] Ibid., p.43.

own excellence. Happiness can be found in various ways of life. There are several excellences of man including ethical excellence and dianoetic excellence. But true happiness can only be achieved by the life of reason, contemplation, *bios theoretikos*, which is risen through the dianoetic excellences. A good society, in the Aristotelian sense, is a society in which the *eudaimonia* of man can be realized. Thus the existence of a good society depends on the group of men who are predominant in the society. The predominant group of men is the "norm and measure" in Aristotle's sense.

Aristotle identified the *spoudaios* as the best man and connects individual and society to the *bios theoretikos* as the best life and as the *eudaimonia* for both individual and society. The society that corresponds to this man is called the *spoudaia polis* (literally, the mature polis), which is that political community that achieves the highest societal good, the *polis eudaimon*. Although the society as a whole is a reflection of the *spoudaios*, the inhabitants are not all capable of reaching the heights that the *spoudaios* can attain. It is noteworthy that the mature man is the "representative" of everyman, and the masses have the right to demand of him that he present to them his answers to the unfathomable mystery of human existence and the relation between the being of man and the Being of transcendence. In this sense, philosophy is "not a solitary but a social enterprise. Its results concern everyman; it is undertaken

by the sapiens representatively for everyman. More specifically the represented have the right to receive answers not only to their own questions but also to hear answers to brilliant and well propagated errors which threaten to disintegrate the order of existence in everyman personally."[143]

For Plato and Aristotle, the notion *nous* of man is cognate with the divine *Nous* by way of the *logos* (law, reasoning power). And man must seek the divine *Nous* through the *zetema* (philosophical inquiry) in order that he may experience in his soul the inner balance that will allow him to live in accordance with reason and virtue. Furthermore, it is the task of the political order so to structure its institutions that it will encourage the attainment of the life of reason. Society must actively support the *zetema* that seeks the divine *Nous* that is substantial to the world of things and lives and minds, that finds in the soul something similar to divine reality, that searches for the ethic that places man's *telos* in the knowledge of the ground of all being. For the seekers who attain to such knowledge are those that can determine what is the right order for a society, for they are both measure and standard for the classification of the empirical varieties of social institutions as well as the private morality of the inhabitants of the society. In essence, the seekers are the representatives of their society in that they are the best

[143] E. Voegelin, "On Debate and Existence," p.144.

that their society can produce and the structure of this society must reflect the order that it has itself produced in the psyches of its best men.

The anthropological and theological principles can be summarized as follows: (1) the character of a given political order is the reflection of the psyche of its ruling elite; (2) the best society will reflect the pattern of right order of the psyche of the best man in its institutional order; (3) the best man is the person who has attained knowledge of the truth of the divine reality that is the measure of man, and applied the measure to himself, and, through himself, to the political order. The anthropology of Plato and Aristotle becomes a political science because it is inquiring into order and disorder in society through a study of the state of the individual soul which expresses itself in the corresponding state of society. A polis is in order when it is ruled by men with well-ordered souls; it is in disorder when the souls of the rulers are disordered. In this sense, not only the good polis is man writ large, but every polis writes large the type of man that is socially dominant in it. Plato's good polis is the philosopher written large, while corrupt society is "the greatest of all sophists." It is in this light that we must view the conflict between the true philosophers, Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, and their opponents the Sophists.

For Plato and Aristotle, the true philosopher is the law-giver of society; the sophist is the false prophet who corrupts the souls of its citizens and on a parochially empirical level destroys the just order of society. The philosopher is the man who attempts to establish right order in his soul through resistance to the diseased soul of the society; the man who can evoke a paradigm of right social order in the image of his well-ordered soul, in opposition to the disorder of society which reflects the disorder of the sophist's soul. The disorder of society is a disease in the souls of its members. And the disorder of the human souls is a disease of society. Ultimately, the spirit of man (the personal soul) and the nature of society (the body politic) are identical. Evidently society depends on individuals and vice versa: that is, good societies produce good men, good men good societies. And, as Voegelin writes,

> Society can destroy a man's soul because the disorder of society is a disease in the psyche of its members. The troubles which the philosopher experiences in his own soul are the troubles in the psyche of the surrounding society which press on him. And the diagnosis of health and disease in the soul is, therefore, at the same time a diagnosis of order and disorder in society...Justice is sometimes spoken of as the virtue of a single man, sometimes of a polis.[144]

Indeed, Plato "plays back and forth, in the *Republic*, between the order in the polis and the order of the soul, illuminating the one by the other."[145] Since justice is the

[144] *OH*, III, p.69-70.

[145] Ibid., p.88.

right relationship of each person with his nature or rather the right correspondence of human action with natural order, man ought not to live as the civil society orders but as nature orders--in Biblical teaching, God orders. That is, justice is natural, and societies ought to conform it. But in any given civilization the conventional--or, historically existing--societies say that justice is conventional or made by society. Perhaps the conventional societies seem to defend this view with good reason, for Platonic justice, as many modern inquirers and the public in general believe, appears to exist nowhere in the world.

However, this unreflective presumption is due to the misunderstanding of the purpose of the classical political philosophy. One of the purposes of Platonic political philosophy is to account for deviations in human conduct by pointing out the source of injustice. But it also points out the way to remedy it--if not in entire societies, then at least in one's own society, the soul. In order to discover what is good for the society, one must look into the individual lives of those who compose it. This means that the domination of individuals by society, which is ordinarily encountered in the world, is a serious distortion of right order. Therefore, the interest of political philosophy in saving societies is subordinate to the interest in saving individual souls. But what if all or most of the individuals in a society were or became

philosophers? This could never happen because the multitude is not philosophical. Only a few or only one man can be really philosophical, according to Plato. And this is beneficial to society because if many were philosophers social order may even break down. The best arrangement or the best society is, thus, Aristocracy,[146] government by the best, in which the many follow the lead of the few philosophers. In this respect, Plato's philosophy is not a philosophy but the symbolic act of salvation for the philosopher himself and others. It is the ascent toward the salvation for everyman and the society.

In this sense, Plato appears to be a religious figure, theologically-inclined, concerned about gods and invisible beings. This certainly complicates Plato for modern scholars nurtured on positivistic empiricism. However, once again, what Plato founded was political philosophy and not religion or a system of worship. The discipline with which we associate him was a "rule of reason"--reason in the comprehensive sense, i.e., *nous*, or *ratio*. As we have seen Platonic political philosophy points beyond this phenomenal life to eternity. It is because Platonic political philosophy ultimately concerned with realities not experienced in phenomenal or positivistic sense but experienced in eternal, transcendental, metaphysical or philosophical sense. In some sense, death is therefore more

[146] The word, "Aristocracy" is coined by Plato himself. Though there were states of this kind in existence which he instances, they called themselves aristocracies; Plato, however, wishes to keep the word Aristocracy for the best polis where the rulers are really the best.

significant for Platonic philosophy than life. But it is not biological death. Death is not an biological end but is the true beginning, or rebirth, to a life beyond which is more real than our physical and phenomenal existence.

The estrangement between conventional societies and philosophers reflects the problem of cosmic dualism, or the inevitable tension between time and eternity, between good and evil, *amor Dei* and *amor Sui*, between orientations to this mundane world and the extra-mundane world, and the transcendent-immanent tension of being as an In-Between reality. For Plato, however, the Idea or the Form is his reality. The good polis is thus not an ideal state; rather, in his sense, the historically existing societies that alienate themselves from philosophy are the corruption of reality.

4. THEORY OF HISTORY

History as a Form of Existence

In Voegelin's view, the aim of history is not antiquarian, nor yet pragmatic. As he says, history is not a "chronological encyclopedia," but the "unfolding of a pattern of meaning in time."[147] His examination of the historical and social order of existence in community should be seen "not as an attempt to explore curiosities of a dead past, but as an inquiry into the structure of the order in which we live presently."[148] Voegelin writes:

> For the ray of light that penetrates from a historical present into its past does not produce a "meaning of history" that could be stored away as a piece of information once for all, nor does it gather in a "legacy" or "heritage" on which the present could sit contentedly. It rather reveals a mankind striving for its order of existence within the world while attuning itself with the truth of being beyond the world, and gaining in the process not a substantially better order within the world but an increased understanding of the gulf that lies between immanent existence and the transcendent truth of being. Canaan is as far away today as it has always been in the past. Anybody who has ever sensed this increase of dramatic tension in the historical present will be cured of complacency, for the light that falls over the past deepens the darkness that surrounds the future. He will shudder before the abysmal mystery of history as the instrument of divine revelation for ultimate purposes that are unknown equally to the men of all ages.[149]

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[147] E. Voegelin, "Political Theory and the Pattern of General History," *American Political Science Review*, 38 (1944), p.748.

[148] *OH*, I, p.xiv.

[149] Ibid., p.129.

This unique conception of history crystallized by Voegelin goes against the parochial conception of history developed by the schools of historical thoughts--i.e., liberal, evolutionary, and positivistic schools--which emerged in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, and have dominated so thoroughly the discussion of historical problems that many people seem unaware that another venerable interpretation of history exists.[150] As a result of the modern pragmatic conception of history, there emerged two kinds of history.[151] One is the erroneous and misguided closure of history into a system which can be observed from the outside. It is a "historiography that limits itself to the phenomenological description of mental realities of the past and that results in the doxagraphic presentation of doctrines isolated from the motivating experiences behind them."[152] To use Voegelin's words, it is "historical constructions reflecting a deformed existence." The other is the rubbish heap of "mere information," the gathering of "empirical materials." Voegelin calls it the "sausage view" of history, for this view sees the "present," as a kind of machinery grinds out an ever lengthening "past."[153]

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[150] See *FETR*, Chapter One; Russell Kirk, *Enemies of the Permanent Things: Observations of Abnormity in Literature and Politics* (New Rochelle, NY: Arlington House, 1969), pp.259-63; and, Larry Schmidt, "Eric Voegelin's Contribution to a Theology of History," in John Kirby and William M. Thompson, eds., *Voegelin and the Theologian: Ten Studies in the Interpretation* (Toronto: Edwin Mellen Press, 1983), pp.291-295.

[151] A. Moulakis, "Political Reality and History...," p.131.

[152] Ibid., p.130.

[153] *OH*, IV, p.332.

What becomes evident from this parochial conceptions of history is that history is exposed to the danger of reification as other fields of experience. The hypostatically reified historian is the mere recorder of a history structured by events. Such a conception rests, according to Voegelin, on a erroneous assumption that outer time constitutes an autonomous realm of Being. In fact, "time is but the dimension of duration of the astrophysical universe, a dimension which can therefore be measured by the patterns of movement of the universe. But the astrophysical universe is not identical with Being. It is itself a process within the entirety of Being (*to pan*) even though its duration outdistances our transient human existence by very far indeed."[154] "Things do not happen in the astrophysical universe; the universe together with all things founded in it happens in God."[155] Once again, therefore, history is not simply the activity of a subject studying objects "out there," susceptible to treatment by the natural scientific methods.

To seek to avoid the pitfalls of the truncated view of history, Voegelin conceives the history of order as "an insightful looking back over a course of events, that is made present to consciousness not as a non-committal collection of facts, but as a formative element of the order of consciousness itself. It is when, and only when, past

[154] A. Moulakis, "Political Reality and History...," p.130.

[155] *OH*, IV, p.334.

events become present to consciousness in this manner, significantly affecting its structure, that they are raised to the rank of 'history'."[156] In the first volume of his *magnum opus*, *Order and History*, which is entitled *Israel and Revelation*, Voegelin declares, "[h]istory is the revelation of the way of God with man."[157] He believes that history is the record of human existence under God, meaningful only so far as it reflects, explains and illustrates the order of the soul and of society which emanates from divine purpose.

> History creates mankind as the community of men who, through the ages, approach the true order of being that has its origin in God; but, at the same time, mankind creates this history through its real approach to existence under God.[158]

For Voegelin "[h]istory has no knowable meaning (*eidos* or essence)."[159] Sustaining this view, Sandoz says, "although meaning *in* history can be discerned in finite lines of development, the meaning of history in its entirety remains shrouded in mystery."[160] Since "[m]an's partnership in being is the essence of his existence,"[161] history should be understood "from the perspective of participation, upon the

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[156] A. Moulakis, "Political Reality and History...," p.129. See also, *Anamnesis* (German), pp.318-19, English version, p.178.

[157] *OH*, I, p.128.

[158] Ibid.

[159] *OH*, II, p.2.

[160] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, pp.111-112.

[161] *OH*, I, p.2.

basis of man's experiences as a partner in being, because this is man's place in the structure of being; there is no alternative vantage point, no other role to play."[162] What Voegelin's view of history means is, as Webb remarks, that "history in the proper sense of the word--history as lived by one who attends and responds to the calling implicit in the experienced tension of existence--is a process of gradually emerging existential truth, of development, that is, into conscious existence attuned both cognitively and ethically to the structure of reality."[163] The historical consciousness of society is not a body of factual knowledge somehow disseminated among the members of that society, but a constituent of the society's present as perceived to be meaningful in the light of man's experience of participatory existence. Voegelin says:

> Human existence in society has history because it has a dimension of spirit and freedom beyond mere animal existence, because social order is an attunement of man with the order of being, and because this order can be understood by man and realized in society with increasing approximations to its truth. Every society is organized for survival in the world and, at the same time, for partnership in the order of being that has its origin in world-transcendent divine Being; it has to cope with the problems of its pragmatic existence and, at the same time, it is concerned with the truth of its order. The struggle for the truth of order is the very substance of history.[164]

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[162] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.124. E. Sandoz, "Voegelin's Idea of Historical Form," *Cross Currents*, 12:1 (Winter 1962), p.48.

[163] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.49.

[164] *OH*, II, p.2.

In short, Voegelin's formulation of the basic conception of history is that it is "a process of increasingly differentiated insight into the order of being in which man participates by his existence."[165] This means that "[w]hat happens 'in' history is the very process of differentiating consciousness that constitutes history."[166] For Voegelin, therefore, "history is differentiated as a form of existence," and the purpose of history is to reveal to man and society the true nature of being. Therefore, to Voegelin history is not the mere knowledge of things past, but the symbolic articulation of man's experience of participation in the process of reality which is incarnated as temporal process of the tension of existence in its orientation toward the divine beyond of existence. In this sense, history is identical with philosophy. As Webb says, both "history and philosophy are processes that take place in a field of tension between existential truth and untruth."[167] "[History] is the very tension," says Voegelin, "in which the philosopher lives and moves...His concern is, therefore, not with truth as a bit of information that has escaped his contemporaries, but as a pole in the tension of order and disorder, of reality and loss of reality, he experiences as his own."[168]

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[165] *OH*, IV, p.1.

[166] Ibid., p.332.

[167] E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.50.

[168] E. Voegelin, "Immortality: Experience and Symbol," p.250.

As we have seen earlier, the historical dimension of the process of consciousness consists in the record of people who have expressed their experiences of reality in symbols. The symbols cannot be understood without penetration to the depth of the particular experience of existence and the manner in which it was represented through the engendering of symbols, for each symbolization is an attempt to answer a question about existence. The search for the meaning of symbols, therefore, is the history of the search for emergent truths about man's fundamental problems.

The quaternarian structure of being consisting of God, man, world and society indicates both the starting point of Voegelin's philosophy of history and the range within which the inquiry moves. The study of these symbolizations provides an avenue to the understanding of history, for it is through these symbols that societies express their own understanding of the order of being. The historical sequence of these symbolizations is therefore the key to the history of order, from which "the order of history emerges."[169] The history of order means the inquiry into symbolically expressed, socially constitutive experiences of order as they have manifested themselves concretely in the course of time. However, the order of history in Voegelin's sense is not a structure of progress from primitive, backward times to a "higher" order of civilization. Rather, it shows "men of the same nature as ours wrestling with the

[169] *OH*, I, p.1.

same problems as ours" under conditions that differ and with "less differentiated instruments of symbolization."[170]

According to Voegelin, the search for order takes place within the framework of three general principles: (1) the nature of man is constant; (2) the range of human experience is always present in the fullness of its dimensions; and, (3) the structure of the range varies from compactness to differentiations.[171] The Aristotelian symbolism of "essence" or "nature" as being that without which a thing would not be what it is, defines human nature as constant. For man is man, what makes him a man is "human nature." This nature does not change, for, if so, man would not be man. What differs over time is not human nature but man's understanding of the range of experience and his symbols in which he expresses the range. In short, what changes in history is not human nature but man's consciousness of order. Voegelin contends that man's experience of reality moves from compact to more differentiated experiences, and what the sequence of symbolizations reveals is the development from compact to differentiated forms. The development from compact to differentiated forms of consciousness is a fundamental discovery of Voegelin's philosophy of history. Therefore, the study of the history of order is the study of the symbolization of an understanding that lifted mankind from an earlier compact

[170] *OH*, II, pp.5-6.

[171] *OH*, I, p.60.

order to a more fully differentiated one. Although these differentiations occur mainly in relation to man's self-understanding of God, they may have profound implications for the entire quaternarian structure of being of which man is just a part.

The Leap in Being

The symbolic forms of political organization in any given civilizations reflect the particular manner in which a particular society experiences its own participation in being and the society arranges its institutions in accordance with the experience. Man participates in a cosmos, i.e., in a reality by his existence and is "endowed with cognitive consciousness of the reality in which he is a partner; consciousness differentiates in a process called history; and in the process of history man discovers reality to be engaged in a movement toward the Beyond of its present structure."[172] However, as Voegelin holds, an increasing awareness of the inadequacy of "unseemly" symbolization causes men to seek a deeper and a wider understanding of the truth. This seeking consists in stages of movement in man's understanding of the mystery of his own participation in being.

For Voegelin the word "leap in being" means the experience giving rise to historical form. It also means the various experiential stages that move mankind along the

[172] *OH*, IV, p.19.

path of creating more adequate symbols of truth. Each leap in being develops from an increasing awareness of the emergence of meaning in which man's participation in divine being is experienced. This means that the leap in being is the result of a spiritual outburst of understanding that is reflected in the political communities of man. Therefore, the "leap in being, the experience of divine being as world-transcendent, is inseparable from the understanding of man as human."[173] The leap in being is also "the epochal event that breaks the compactness of the early cosmological myth and establishes the order of man in his immediacy under God."[174] However, the leap in being is not to be understood as "a leap out of existence. The emphatic partnership with God does not abolish partnership with the community of being at large, which includes being in mundane existence."[175] With the leap in being, the horizon of history opens and enlarges; man and society enter into existence in historical form, and man will come to know his nature in the new mode of explicit, differentiated symbolization. Therefore, the historical dimension of human nature is "an essential component of man, [but] its presence rises to the level of consciousness only through the leap in being."[176] In short, the leap in being is a historical experience and occurs in

[173] *OH*, I, p.235.

[174] *OH*, II, p.1.

[175] *OH*, I, p.11.

[176] *OH*, II, p.2.

certain well-defined stages of movement. We will focus here on the fundamental differentiations in consciousness.[177]

The primeval form of symbolization of reality is the cosmological myth which is the "first symbolic form created by societies when they rise above the level of tribal organization."[178] This cosmological form of experience is defined as "the symbolization of political order by means of cosmic analogies. The life of man and society is experienced as ordered by the same forces of being which order the cosmos, and cosmic analogies both express this knowledge and integrate social into cosmic order."[179] This level is the compact world in which gods and man, world and society form the single community of existence and man knows the divine ground of being through the fact of his participation. There is a singular correspondence between the government of the cosmos and the government of human society, between the structure of the universe by the gods and of the structure of human society by men, for "to establish a government is an essay in world creation. When man creates the cosmion of political order, he analogically repeals the divine creation of the cosmos."[180] The major, primary experience of man is consubstantiality of being with

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[177] In reviewing Voegelin's articulation of the leap in being, I am indebted to E.H. Wainwright, "Eric Voegelin: an Inquiry into the Philosophy of Order," *Politikon*, 5:1 (June 1978), pp.83-90.

[178] *OH*, I, p.14.

[179] Ibid., p.38.

[180] Ibid., p.16.

the Being of divine order. Man translates this experience of the substantive oneness of being into the political mesocosm that reflects the oneness insofar as a concrete thing is able to reflect an intangible feeling.

The cosmos "of the primary experience is neither the external world of objects given to a subject of cognition, nor is it the world that has been created by a world-transcendent God. Rather, it is the whole, *to pan*, of an earth below and a heaven above--of celestial bodies and their movements; of seasonal changes; of fertility rhythms in plant and animal life; of human life, birth and death; and above all, as Thales still knew, it is a cosmos full of gods."[181] This last point must be emphasized: that the gods are intracosmic, for the facile categorizations of polytheism and monotheism miss the main point of a world that is permeated by divinity. Within such a world, the actual number of gods is relatively unimportant, the emphasis is on man's consciousness of divine reality as something that is intracosmic; not transmundane, but a consciousness of divinity pervading the whole of being, and this concept includes man himself. And within this divinized world, the divine ground is immanent throughout. In all being there exists the chains of an epiphany of divinity, in all sight, in all thought, and in all deeds which is a beginning and an end in itself. Ancient man discovered within this epiphany a universal revelation upon

[181] *OH*, IV, p.68.

which he based his "political mesocosm."[182] In a word, at the level of the "primary experience of the cosmos," divine reality is experienced as intracosmic; the order of the cosmos is reflected in the mundane order.

For instance, in Mesopotamia the empire in its spatial organization was regarded as the archetype of the order of the cosmos, on the principle of the correspondence between macrocosm and microcosm.[183] Egyptian culture was also grounded in the consubstantiality of the divine order with the Pharaonic order.[184] In the early Egyptian society the divine order of the cosmos was mediated by the Pharaoh who was the mythic son of the cosmic gods. Thus, the Pharaoh was the nexus between the cosmic order and the social order. Pharaonic order was a continuous renewal and reenactment of the cosmic order from eternity.[185] Through Pharaoh, in whom the presence of god was manifest, the most humble subject participated in the "timeless serenity" of cosmic order. Voegelin holds that "We began our history of order not with Israel, but with the Mesopotamian and Egyptian empires, because in retrospect the struggle for order in the medium of cosmological symbols appeared to be the first phase in the search for the true order of being that was carried one

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[182] E. Wainwright, "The Zetema of Eric Voegelin...," p.46.

[183] *OH*, I, pp.25ff.

[184] Ibid., p.70.

[185] Ibid., p.78.

step further by Israel."[186] But the attunement of society with transcendent reality was never achieved in the Egyptian compact experience. The transcendence could become the ordering force of a religious or philosophical personality who, in turn, could become the center of a new type of community.

Since the "compact experience of cosmological order proved to be tenacious,"[187] there occurred a number of "spiritual outbursts" which led to a break with the cosmological order and the perception of a truer way of life. Voegelin mentions four of these leaps in being. First came that of Israel, through Moses and the prophets; next that of Greece, through the great philosophers from Parmenides to Aristotle; then India, through the Buddha and Mahavaria; finally, China, through Confucious and Lao-tze. Voegelin shows that the two latter leaps have remained somewhat incomplete and focuses his attention on Israel and Greece, the analysis of which is itself a breakthrough in historical scholarship.[188]

The compact form of experience began to differentiate in the Israelite experience of revelation. "Through the

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[186] Ibid., p.127.

[187] Ibid., p.111.

[188] The discovery of the universal humanity of man can be sometimes identified as the final leap in the Western civilization. The leap into the concept of universal humanity is derived from the establishment of the ecumenic empires, which were only organizational forms that reached out for a spiritual substance that would fill them, and which they found in the universal religions. In relation to the establishment of the ecumenic empires, I will review rather in the next chapter which focuses mainly on the modernity and gnostic disorder.

leap in being, that is, through the discovery of transcendent being as the source of order in man and society, Israel constituted itself the carrier of a new truth in history." The first leap in being is derived from the "differentiating experience of a world-transcendent divine being,"[189] where the "interplay of experiences in the struggle of the spirit for its freedom from encasement in a particular social organization"[190] leads to the establishment of a particular community (i.e., Israel) as a people under God. The constitution of a community under God who revealed Himself to man was the construction of the beginning of a "paradigmatic world-history," which took its materials from the "variegated contents of myth and history,"[191] and moved man from a position of cosmic myth into historical consciousness.

This first leap culminated in Moses' hierophany on Mt. Sinai of the burning bush and the "I am; that is who I am." These revelatory experiences are a clear break with the intracosmic experience of the divine. With this experience of transcendent God, the cosmological social order is also changed. Moses concludes his experiences with a covenant which breaks the Israelite's ties to the cosmological Pharaonic order. For the Israelite the mediator between the Divine order and the social order is now the covenant

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[189] *OH*, I, p.51.

[190] Ibid., p.183.

[191] Ibid., p.185.

(*berith*). The leap in being at this level is associated with two symbols: *exodus* and *berith*. The *exodus* denotes the separation of the particular community from its bondage to the cosmological myth of Egypt, and the *berith* opposes the authenticity of the experience of an intangible, unseen, spiritual divinity to the concrete compactness of a divinized world.

Traditionally, the *berith* was associated with Abram who became Abraham, whose "spiritual sensitiveness" to the revelation of God created an "order of existence in opposition to the world" and transformed "the symbol of civilizational bondage" to the compact and ordered cosmos of a divine oneness of being into the "symbol of divine liberation."[192] This original *berith* was fulfilled when Moses led the "Chosen People" out of bondage to the *sheol* (realm of the dead) of Egypt into the desert where they could be moulded into a people that would be capable of experiencing a divinity external to man. The Israelite experience awakened the universalist potentialities[193] of Yahweh's revelation to Moses that lay dormant in the tradition. Thus Voegelin says, "[w]ithout Israel there would be no history, only the eternal recurrence of

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[192] Ibid., p.195.

[193] The existence of the community is freed (*exodus*) from the constricting bonds of the cosmological myth as it moves into the experience of living in the historical form and is no longer bound by the structuring cosmic myths of the universe, but by God who created the universe. The people of Israel took this step into history as representatives of all men, even though "the universalist implications of the experience were never successfully explicated within Israelite history." Ibid., p.164.

societies in cosmological form."[194] To the Israelite people, the existence or non-existence of the kingdom was irrelevant to "life in righteousness before the Lord." Their mission was to recall Israel to the covenant mode of existence which was transparent for the order of transcendent reality.

The other important differentiation in man's experience, or the second leap occurs in ancient Greece among the mystic philosophers to culminate in Plato's differentiation. While the cosmological order understands men as living in a natural and social cosmos that is "full of gods," the "spiritual outburst" consists in a human experience of participation in a transcendent divinity beyond both the natural and social tangible existence. The experience has the character of a discovery, not only of the transcendent god but also of that in man which can respond to and participate in, the divine.[195] The discovery results in a depreciation of the cosmological symbols of order and the perception and practice of a "new life," which appears as a leap in being, rising above what went before. In the Greek differentiation, however, the symbolic form of existence in truth is not revelation which is the paradigmatic history of Israelite consciousness, but philosophy which finds its optimal expression in the

[194] Ibid., p.126.

[195] G. Niemeyer, "Eric Voegelin's Philosophy and the Drama of Mankind," *Modern Age*, 20:1 (Winter 1976), p.29.

dialectic of the Platonic dialogue. The discovery of philosophy as a symbolic form is not as radical a break with the experience of the primary symbol of the cosmological myth as is Israelite revelation, for in Israel God is in search of man, while in Hellas man is in search of God. The motivating centers of leap in being can be circumscribed through comparisons between the Hellenic and the Israelite experiences, as developed by Voegelin:

> The Hellenic consciousness of history is motivated by the experience of a crisis; the society itself, as well as the course of its order, is constituted in retrospect from its end. The Israelite consciousness of history is motivated by the experience of a divine revelation; the society is constituted through the response to revelation, and from this beginning it projects its existence into the open horizon of time. The Hellenic consciousness arrives, through the understanding of disorder, at the understanding of true order--that is the process for which Aeschylus has found the formula of wisdom through suffering; the Israelite consciousness begins, through the Message and Decalogue from Sinai, with the knowledge of true order. The Mosaic and prophetic leap in being creates the society in which it occurs in historical form for the future; the philosophic leap in being discovers the historical form, and with it the past, of the society in which it occurs. Such contrapuntal formulations will bring into focus the essential difference between the historical forms that are developed respectively by Revelation and Philosophy. The word, the *dabar*, immediately and fully reveals the spiritual order of existence, as well as its origin in transcendent-divine being, but leaves it to the prophet to discover the immutability and recalcitrance of the world-immanent structure of being; the philosopher's love of wisdom slowly dissolves the compactness of cosmic order until it has become the order of world-immanent being beyond which is sensed, though never revealed, the unseen transcendent measure.[196]

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[196] *OH*, II, p.52.

The Greek experience of differentiation moves into the noetic mode of thinking and of the attunement of individual person to divine being. The attunement is derived from the insight that man must and can be measured by the highest order of existence within him through his participation in the divine reality, as elucidated in the Platonic anthropology, even though the standard for the highest order within man comes from the divine *Nous* external to man. In the openness toward the transcendent divinity the reality becomes intelligible. The noetic mode of consciousness refers to the man's reflective, self-conscious experience of existential order that is attuned to the divine *Nous*. The noetic mode thus is a rational inquiry--not in the modern pragmatic sense--into the truth of being and into man's experience of existential tension in which the unseen God is the measure of what man can and must be.

Voegelin contends that the Allegory of the Cave in the *Republic* is mythopoetic[197] articulation of theophany. Thus, the philosopher's turning (*periagoge*) of the soul toward the illumination of the *Agathon* and away from the shadows of opinion articulates Plato's discovery of the soul. At this point, the illustration of the Platonic vision of *Agathon* becomes topical. What is the Idea of the *Agathon*? To this question Voegelin replies:

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[197] "Mythopoesis" means deliberate poetic myth-making, that Plato engaged in to represent the absolutely transcendent and man's destiny in it. He invented such fables as "The Myth of Er" as "saving tales." See *OH*, IV, pp.223, 225, 36. Voegelin remarked that Paul's story of Jesus was also a product of mythopoesis, and he referred to the gospel news of "divine Incarnation, Death and Resurrection" as a "saving tale." See Ibid., pp.248-251.

> Concerning the content of the Agathon nothing can be said at all. That is the fundamental insight of Platonic ethics. The transcendence (*epekeina*) of the Agathon makes immanent propositions concerning its content impossible. The vision of the Agathon does not render a material rule of conduct, but forms the soul through an experience of transcendence.[198]

What Voegelin means is that statement about the Agathon cannot exhaust its content. And in any case the vision of the Agathon, the experience of transcendence, or leap in being, does not yield "a truth that one cannot sit on or possess like a thing once and for all."[199] It is the "flash of eternity into time."[200] The vision of the Good "forms the soul through an experience of transcendence."[201] Ultimately the Good is something one experiences rather than something one knows. Thus, paraphrasing Plato, Voegelin is concerned not to lead us to knowledge of the Good but to experience the Good.

The third and final leap was the discovery of the universal humanity of man, the universalist differentiation in the consciousness of Jesus Christ. The leap into the concept of universal humanity is derived from the establishment of the ecumenic empires, which were only organizational forms that reached out for a spiritual

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[198] *OH*, III, pp.112ff.

[199] E. Sandoz, "Voegelin's Idea of Historical Form," p.43.

[200] *OH*, III, p.363.

[201] Ibid., p.112.

substance that would fill them, and which they found in the universal religions. With the epiphany of Christ, the Church became the mediator of Divine order into the social order, and the political realm became de-divinized. Voegelin's analysis of this universalist differentiation begins with "the struggle between three competing truths for representation in the Roman Empire, where the Roman state cult represented the dying truth of 'the cosmos filled with gods,' Greek philosophy the truth of world-transcendent being, and Christianity the revolutionary truth of Redemption and of the ultimate salvation of man's soul as his supreme goal in this life."[202]

Chritianity confirms the Greek understanding of man whose soul is opened toward transcendental reality and enlarges upon the experience with which the Greek philosophy was concerned. But whereas the Greeks emphasized man's ascent to God, Christianity emphasizes God's descent to man, and if it is by reason that man approaches God it is by grace (revelation) that God approaches man. With coming of Christ, the critical authority over the older truth of society which the soul had gained through its opening and its orientation toward the unknown measure was now confirmed through the revelation of the measure itself. However, man's spiritual destiny in the Christian sense cannot be represented on earth by the power organization of a

[202] G. Sebba, "Prelude and Variations of the Theme of Eric Voegelin," E. Sandoz, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Thought* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1982), p.21.

political society; it can be represented only by the church. As a consequence, the sphere of political power is in turn radically de-divinized; it has become temporal. The double representation of man in society through church and empire lasted through the Middle Ages. As we will encounter in the next chapter, the specifically modern problems of representation are connected with the re-divinization of society.[203]

5. *EPISTEME POLITIKE*

Noetic experience and science, or the "noese" as Voegelin terms it, is the symbolic form of true philosophy. Political science in the Voegelinian sense is a "noetic interpretation" of political reality, that is noetic interpretation of man, society, and history claiming a critical knowledge of order *vis a vis* the non-noetic conception of order prevailing in the conventional society itself. "The term noese, noetic experience, noetic interpretation, and the like derive from the technical vocabulary of Classical philosophy, specifically from the word *nous* which means, variously, reason, thought, and mind."[204]

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[203] *NSP*, p.106.

[204] E. Sandoz, "Eric Voegelin and the Nature of Philosophy," *Modern Age*, 13:2 (Spring 1969), p.159. The classical understanding of the term, reason (*nous*) is far more complex than the truncated "reason" of the Enlightenment. And the classical position must be fully understood, as Voegelin uses the term in that sense. *Nous* can be identified as follows: "(1) the consciousness of existing from a Ground,

When Voegelin defines political science as the noetic interpretation of political reality, the concrete meaning of the expression may be suggested by saying that noese is an interpretation of political reality substantially like that given by Plato and Aristotle. He explicitly adopts what he understands to be the Aristotelian conception of political science (*episteme politike*). Thus, when he speaks of political science he means a discipline which is firmly grounded on political philosophy or the philosophy of order, and which is being distinctive from the "hard" or phenomenal sciences dealing with the "external world." He rejects the claim of positivists to represent the "scientific" approach to politics.

Noetic interpretation precludes the understanding of political science in terms of a phenomenal science which operates with axioms, strives to be systematic, and models

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an awareness filled with content and not empty. Reason is thereby the instrument for handling world-immanent reality. Rebellion against reason since the eighteenth century creates a void in this dimension that must then be filled by substitutes; (2) the transcendence of human existence, thereby establishing the poles of consciousness: immanent-transcendent; (3) the creative Ground of existence which attracts man to itself; (4) the sensorium whereby man understands himself to exist from a Ground; (5) the articulation of this understanding through universal ideas; (6) the perseverance through a lifetime of one's concern about one's relation to the ground, generative of existential virtue: *phronesis* (wisdom, prudence), *philia* (friendship), and *athanatizein* (the immortalization of human existence); (7) the effort to order existence by the insight gained through understanding of the self to be existentially linked to the Ground and attuned to it: the major intellectual operation of so translating consequences of this insight as to form daily habits in accordance with it; (8) the persuasive effort to induce conscious participation of the self, and other men's conscious participation, in transcendent reason (Plato's *peitho*). The problem of communicating and propagating the truth of being; (9) the constituent of man through his participation in (the reason of) the Ground; or, the constituent force in man qua human through participation in the divine *Nous* which his specific essence; (10) the constituent of society as the *homonoia* or "like-mindedness" of everyman in a community formed through recognition of the reason common to all men. Nietzsche perceived that if that is surrendered then there is no reason to love anybody, one consequence of which is the loss of the sense and force of obligation in society and, hence, of its cohesiveness." E. Sandoz, ""The Philosophical Science of Politics Beyond Bahavioralism," pp.301-302.

itself through methodological rigor on the natural and mathematizing sciences of the external world.[205] "Because political science is unable to view its subject matter as an object 'outside' the self but must rather recognize the investigator himself as a participant in the existential drama he sets out to illumine, there allegedly can never be any definitive 'principles' or 'axioms' for such a science."[206] To Voegelin, as to Plato and Aristotle, therefore, political science (*episteme politike*) and political philosophy are essentially one and the same, because political science was conceived in Greek philosophy to be noetic, self-critical interpretation of man and society.

Like Plato's, Voegelin's political philosophy emerges from deep personal experience with the disorder of our times; he has come to see the disorder of the twentieth century as a reflection of the disorientation of our consciousness. "In an effort to understand why our consciousness is disoriented, where we went wrong, so to speak, he has been led not only to reject the false consciousness of modern ideologies that distort reality by arbitrarily limiting the perspective with which we can encounter reality, but also to search Western history from its very beginning for that point of reference that defines

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[205] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), pp.283ff, 318; *NSP*, pp.3ff.

[206] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's *Anamnesis*," p.75.

our humanity."[207] For Voegelin, one of the purposes of political science, or more rigorously speaking, philosophy is to account for deviations in human conduct by pointing out the source of disorder and injustice in political societies. But it also points out the way to remedy disorder and injustice--if not in entire societies, then at least in one's own society, the soul.

At this point, Plato's "anthropological principle" holds the enduring significance for political philosophy. Since the state is nothing but the man "written in larger letters," in Platonic political science, the same analysis which has been done for human nature can be applied to it. That is, Plato's anthropology becomes a political science which is inquiring into order and disorder in society, because the state of the individual soul expresses itself in the corresponding state of society. In this sense, Voegelin is said to be not concerned only with reconstructing "Platonic philosophy" or "doctrine," but "rather with the way in which Plato sought to resist the disorder of his own society. The recollection of Plato's endeavor may prove to be therapeutic on our own time."[208]

Voegelin's great achievement is to have restored the "scientific"--not natural or positivist scientific but epistemic--character of political science, the science of

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[207] John H. Hallowell, "Existence in Tension: Man in Search of His Humanity," Stephen A. McKnight, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Search for Order in History*, p. 103.

[208] J.H. Hallowell, "Existence in Tension," p.102.

order turning on speculations about transcendent reality. He perceived that a reconstruction of political order was made possible in the restoration of theory to the study of society. For Voegelin, the recovery of the classical political philosophy is a form of "therapeutic analysis."[209] It is a matter of "retheoretization" and "restoration" that will supposedly have practical consequences. That is, he affirms that *episteme politike*, a disciplined exploration of human existence in the light of the whole of being, cast into forms of public truth, can become political order. On the basis of this restored concept of the science of political order, Voegelin broke through the parochial narrowness of contemporary political studies. Political science, which is, to employ Max Scheler's distinction, in the realm of "sciences of the person" rather than that of "sciences of phenomena," is the attempt to achieve a noetic, as distinct from a nonnoetic, interpretation of political reality. And its methods must, therefore, be appropriate to the investigation of the multidimensional participation in political reality experienced from within by the philosopher-theorist-scientist himself.

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[209] *SPG*, p.23.

CHAPTER 4

MODERNITY AND GNOSTICISM

The purpose of this chapter is to review Voegelin's account of modernity and gnosticism as a civilizational critique. One of the most important aspects of Voegelin's political philosophy is his description of a major aspect of modern Western civilization as the expression of the gnostic symbolic form. He notes that gnosticism is a persistent factor in its manifold manifestations within the history of Western civilization. But it has continued as a destructive force in the civilization. The gnostic modern movement has had a pervasive but, at the same time, perverse impact on intellectual and political life in the West. In this chapter Voegelin's articulation regarding the historical development of the gnostic modern disorder will be reviewed. Also a sketch of his critique of gnostic implications especially in the form of the Enlightenment will follow.

1. MODERNITY: GNOSTIC DISORDER

Voegelin's interest in the study of politics stemmed from a response to his deep personal experience[1] with the disorder of the twentieth century characterized by totalitarianism based on Soviet Marxism and German Nazism. The crisis is both political and intellectual in character, but an essential element of his diagnosis of the crisis is the notion that it is most fundamentally a crisis of human soul or a spiritual disorder. Disorder of the soul is failure to grasp the truth of order and to become attuned to it. He thus sees the disorder of our time as a reflection of the disorientation of our consciousness. According to Voegelin, therefore, as expressions of civilizational crisis the modern political and intellectual mass movements could only be understood through an analysis of specific forms of human consciousness. Voegelin, then, sees the primary task of political philosophy as one of developing a theory of human consciousness that could account for the character of our modern age. Inevitably, he is very critical of the modern age or modernity. He sees the tradition of political theory from Plato onward as the decline, or "derailment," of the tradition itself.

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[1] It is interesting but no wonder that in a confused, disrupted time Plato devoted his life to a search for order. In fact, most of the major philosophers of man and society, e.g., St. Augustine, Machiavelli, Hobbes, lived at a time of social and political disorder as an old order collapsed and passed. Hegel very poetically described this phenomenon by suggesting that "the owl of Minerva spreads its wings only with the falling of dusk." *Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, trans. by T.M. Knox (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 13.

From a viewpoint somewhat similar to that of Voegelin, Berman also analyzes the current crisis of the Western legal tradition. According to Berman, in failing to recognize the historical roots of the Western tradition, we are in a crisis of losing the tradition itself. We are threatened with the few surviving elements of the tradition and the disappearance of yet others. He thinks that Western civilization has been degraded into "ideological and technological barbarism." For Berman the principal reason for this crisis is that the Western society is losing some basic characteristics with which the Western legal tradition is founded. He suggests that members of the legal profession, as well as the vast majority of citizens, the people as a whole are losing their consciousness of the beliefs in which the Western legal tradition is rooted. Those beliefs and postulates, including "the structural integrity of law, its ongoingness, its religious roots, its transcendent qualities" are disappearing.[2]

Through an effort to understand why our consciousness is disoriented, Voegelin tries to regain a truth of political order that has been lost through the process of modernization. In so doing, that is, in understanding "where we went wrong, so to speak," as John Hallowell writes, "[Voegelin] has been led not only to reject the false consciousness of modern ideologies that distort reality by arbitrarily limiting the perspective with which

[2] H. Berman, *Law and Revolution* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), p.39.

we can encounter reality, but also to search Western history from its very beginning for that point of reference that defines our humanity."[3] For Voegelin, the recovery of the past is a form of "therapeutic analysis." It is not "an attempt to explore curiosities of a dead past, but an inquiry into the structure of order in which we live presently."[4]

A cardinal feature of Voegelin's philosophy of history is that "the essence of modernity [is] the growth of Gnosticism,"[5] even if gnosticism is not the whole of modernity.[6] Modernity has been aptly defined as the rise of variety of gnostic movements and their doctrines to social dominance, resulting in profound disorder of spirit, mind, and eventually society. Therefore, in his view, gnosticism furnishes the key to the nature of modernity. He has guided us to an understanding of what is the character of our time, through his clear distinction between gnostic disorder and order, ideology and philosophy. As mentioned above, Voegelin has come to see the disorder of our time as a reflection of the gnostic disorientation of our consciousness. He regards gnosticism as an expression of

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[3] J.H. Hallowell, "Existence in Tension," in S.A. McKnight, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Search for Order in History*, p.103.

[4] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.1, *Israel and Revelation*, hereafter *OH*, I, p.xiv.

[5] E. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, p.126. Hereafter *NSP*.

[6] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.110. Voegelin notes: "it must never be forgotten that Western Society is not all modern but that modernity is a growth within it, in opposition to the Classic and Christian tradition." *NSP*, pp.176, 187-188.

libido dominandi of men which stems from a deformed consciousness that distorts its appreciation of reality and creates a "second reality." Reality, because it is not comprehended in its fullness, is likely to be misunderstood and misconstrued. However, what is worse is that man can reject participation in and understanding of reality.

The history of symbolization, which is the history of ongoing search for appropriate understanding of reality, can also be the history deformations of understanding and of human refusals to understand, refusals that are made in the mode of symbolization.[7] For man is not forced to recognize his participation in the drama of existence. Even if he can open his soul and participate in the existential tension, he can also reject and suppress his fundamental awareness of reality; he can eliminate from his conception of the order of being the one element that disturbs him: unknowable divine being in the Hellenic sense or unseen God in the Judeo-Christian sense. If he does, he will cease to look upon himself as a participant in existence. Instead, he considers himself the master, or the potential master in his own world. Consequently, for the search of the truth of being he will ignore the search for the why or the *telos* of the human existence and substitute and limit it to the study for human knowledge of the how.[8]

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[7] *OH*, I, p.10.

[8] The less concern about the why, or, the lack of the teleological worldview is the typical feature of natural-scientific methodology.

The concept of gnosticism is very important in Voegelin's political philosophy as he uses it in the analysis of modern intellectual, spiritual, and political disorder. However, Voegelin's concept of gnosticism was called into question even by some of his admirers.[9] Originally, the term "gnosticism" is a designation traditionally applied to one of the many Christian heresies that flourished during the period between A.D. 30 and 300. But it has now been established that gnosticism was a widespread religious movement whose origins are unknown and which appeared slightly before or contemporaneously with Christianity.[10]

In the formative period of Christian doctrine, however, the "second reality" that the ancient gnostics endeavored to set up was the perversion of the Christian symbolism. Gnosticism substituted a dream of a perfect mundane society for the *civitas Dei*, the City of God. In the Christian symbolism the realms of existence were divided into the eternal, transcendental realm of God and the finite, mundane realm of man; salvation for man lay in the beyond of this physical world. Against this, the gnostic vision was one in which salvation was possible here on this earth and the world was the primeval chaos that was to be transformed into

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[9] See E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1981), pp.198ff; and J.L. Wiser, "From Cultural Analysis to Philosophical Anthropology: An Examination of Voegelin's Concept of Gnosticism," *Review of Politics*, 42:1 (January 1980), pp.92-94. .

[10] On the controversy regarding Voegelin's use of the term gnosticism, see E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, pp.199-200.

an enduring, stable, and perfect order. But, as he explains in *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, the idea of gnosticism that Voegelin had chosen for analytical convenience is not an hermetic Christian heresy. Even though his use of the concept is based on the term in the ancient world, he uses the concept in a much more comprehensive and broader sense than that of the ancient gnosticism both in conception and in coverage.[11]

Voegelin identifies the six characteristic features of gnostic movements by which we can recognize the nature of the gnostic attitude:[12] (1) the gnostic is dissatisfied with his situation; (2) the belief that the drawbacks of the situation can be attributed to the fact that the world is intrinsically poorly organized; (3) the gnostic believes that salvation from the evil of the world is possible; (4) the gnostic believes that the order of being will have to be changed in an historical process, that a good world must evolve historically from this wretched one; (5) the gnostic believes that a change in the order of being lies in the realm of human action, that this salvational act is possible through man's own effort; and, (6) the gnostic makes knowledge--gnosis--of the method of altering being his central concern, because it is his task to seek out the prescription for a structural change in the given order of being to what people can be satisfied with as a perfect one.

[11] Ibid., p.198.

[12] E. Voegelin, *Science, Politics and Gnosticism*, hereafter *SPG*, pp.86-88.

Thus, the gnostic constructs a formula for self and world salvation.

The meaning of the term gnosticism in the Voegelinian sense implies the intellectual and political movement that attempt to escape from the inherent uncertainties and limitations of the *conditio humana*; to allay man's existential anxiety by creating a "second reality" as an adequate representation of the truth of human existence. Voegelin classifies gnostic modes as the main modes of what he believes to be representation in untruth. He contends that the symbols of Christianity and Platonic political philosophy have been sufficiently evocative of the experiences of reality to have touched the consciousness of a large segment of mankind. They had formed the basis for the civilizational order of the West, which has persisted for two millennia. But what is to be noted is that during this period the symbolization had been acted upon by a persistent doctrinal inversion and, once the meaning of the original symbols had been eroded, the inversions evoked mass movements that constantly threatened, and eventually broke through the whole structure of Western society.

In this sense, gnostic thought was generally contained until the erosion of the meaning behind the Christian symbols permitted gnostic symbols of reality to take over the representational function among the nations of the Western world. The gnostic modern age has emerged as "victorious in its effort to replace the anthropological

(Greek) and soteriological (Judeo-Christian) traditions of the past. Historically this effort has been conditioned by the inability of Christianity to serve adequately as the Western form of civil theology."[13] The historical evolution of gnosticism and its denial of the understanding of the differentiated orders of existence attained in Greek philosophy and Christian theology has constituted a "theoretical retrogression,"[14] which has been manifest in all major political and intellectual movements since medieval times.

The Roman emperors attempted, with the aid of Christianity, to organize secular power in such a way that it could represent the spiritual destiny of man. But these attempts failed. Instead, the idea of double representation of society by church and empire came to be adopted, and the gnostic understanding of divinized society persists throughout the Middle Ages. What made Christianity a revolutionary movement was its "radical de-divinization of the world."[15] "The spiritual destiny of man could no longer be represented on earth by the power sphere of political society at all (as it had been in the philosophers' paradigmatic polis) but could only be represented by the Church. Life in the world became temporal, the sphere of power de-divinized, and the dual representation of empire

[13] J.L. Wiser, "From Cultural Analysis...," p.96.

[14] *NSP*, p.79.

[15] Ibid., pp.100, 143ff.

and Church as formulated in Gelasius' doctrine of Two Swords endured to the end of the Middle Ages."[16] Thus spiritual power and temporal power split apart.[17] Secular power was becoming "de-divinized." Political society is no longer the representative of the eternal, ultimate truth which affects the very source of legitimacy, order, and authority of the now wholly temporal state.

It should be noted that the "specifically modern problems of representation are connected with the re-divinization" of secular political society.[18] Though symbolized in an entirely different manner from the ancient mode, gnosticism can be seen in modern times, for example, in Marxism where the Communist order is supposed to be in harmony with the truth in history. The relation between the ancient gnostic religion and the modern mass movements is sufficiently close to make the concept a useful tool for understanding the mass movements in terms of the gnostic symbolism. Of particular importance is the religious aspect of the mass movement.

> These gnostic experiences, in the amplitude of their variety, are the core of the redivinization of society, for the men who fall into these experiences divinize themselves by substituting more massive modes of participation in divinity for faith in the Christian

[16] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.106; cf. *NSP*, pp.100, 159.

[17] For the general purpose of this dissertation, it is worth noting that "the de-divinization of the world...fostered by the emphatic separation of ecclesiastical and secular polities...coincided with the rise of [modern] science." See E. Sandoz, "Book Review: *Law and Revolution*, By Harold Berman," *Louisiana Law Review*, 45 (1985), p.1119.

[18] *NSP*, pp.106, 151.

sense.[19]

Both modern mass movement and the generic meaning of gnosticism share an antithetical attitude to the idea of a divine ground for existence, and center their attention on the conception of the "acosmic self."[20] Two crucial aspects of gnosticism are worth emphasizing here: "(1) Man the creature is not responsible for the evil in which he finds himself. He has a right to blame it on someone or something else. The assumption that 'In Adam's fall/ We sinned all' is to the Gnostic pure nonsense. And (2) Man's salvation depends upon his own efforts. He must rely not upon faith but on gnosis, the secret knowledge that makes it possible for him to evade the snares and entanglements of the demon and to reunite his soul with the divinity from which he has come."[21] These two traits of gnosticism continue to characterize gnosticism even in its present-day secularized form, i.e., modern gnosticism.

The ancient gnostics held that the world has been created by the work of a demon, a god of evil--a cruel demiurge. The corollary was that what the evil god had made was also evil. The world is regretfully imperfect with its mutability, wickedness, and violence. Man was unfortunate

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[19] Ibid., p.124.

[20] For the term "acosmic self," see H. Jonas, "Gnosticism and Modern Nihilism," *Social Research*, 19 (1952), p.442.

[21] Cleanth Brooks, "Walker Percy and Modern Gnosticism," in Harold Bloom, ed., *Walker Percy: Modern Critical Views* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1986), p.56.

to be placed in this flawed world not by his own error but by an evil god. "His task is to extricate himself from this evil world, partially at least by throwing off the bonds of his own evil flesh."[22] Man has the potentiality to be perfect if he does not confound himself with this imperfect world. He could overcome the evil of the world by means of esoteric knowledge of the gnostic way.

Immanentization of the Eschaton

The word "gnosis" in Greek literally means knowledge and it reflects the main objective of the gnostic movement, which was to determine the scope of knowledge of divine things as opposed to certitude. Gnosticism's main claim was that the gap that traditionally existed between the human and the divine realms of being could be bridged by means of the possession of the special brand of knowledge. The esoteric knowledge would make man his own savior and thus obviate the need for any external agent such as the divine revelation. And to the gnostic, Voegelin notes, "[t]he instrument of salvation is gnosis itself--knowledge." Knowledge (not *episteme*, but *gnosis*) of the method of altering being is the central concern of the gnostic.[23] The "*gnosis* of the gnostic is *agnoia*, ignorance of the truth. But it is not innocent ignorance: he *wills* the untruth,

[22] C. Brooks, "Walker Percy and Modern Gnosticism," p.56.

[23] *SPG*, p.87

although he *knows* the truth."[24] As a consequence, "knowledge of the ultimate ground of being through the faith experience (in the Christian horizon, the *cognitio fidei*) is supplanted by the gnosis which, as a body of secret knowledge, is itself sufficient to salvation..."[25] In short, in Voegelin's view, gnosticism is a doctrinal attitude that offers the privileged knowledge that will liberate man from the prison of uncertainty in existence.

The modern gnostics are indeed aware of the poles of inner tension between God and man in which man has found his order of existence. For instance, Marx admitted that the question of God was urged on man by "everything palpable in life," yet Marx proceeded to forbid this question to "socialists."[26] The addict of *libido dominandi*, viz. the ideologist, perceived, as did philosopher, the dimensions of the Beyond, the Transcendence. However, what is to be emphasized here is that "[t]hey did not discard this dimension, but they perverted it by drawing the transcendence into the historical immanence, thereby endowing something human with the character of divinity"[27]--i.e., re-divinization. Similarly, they were aware of the

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[24] G. Sebba, "History, Modernity and Gnosticism," in P.J. Opitz & G. Sebba, eds., *The Philosophy of Order*, p.241.

[25] B. Sandoz, "The Science and Demonology of Politics," *Intercollegiate Review* 5:2 (Winter 1968-69), p.119.

[26] E. Wainwright, "The Zetema of Eric Voegelin," (Ph.D. Dissertation, University of South Africa, 1978), p.48.

[27] G. Niemeyer, "Greatness in Political Science: Eric Voegelin (1901-1985)," *Modern Age*, 29:2 (1985), pp.108ff.

eschatological element at the center of the Christian view of order, but they played false with the eschaton by misplacing it in history. This is the "immanentization of the eschaton."[28]

Modern gnosticism is distinguished by its immanentism. Bruce Douglas delineates the modern gnosticism's immanentistic character by contrasting it with the ancient mode: "Original gnostic religion solved the problem of spiritual and intellectual insecurity by recourse to a surer knowledge of God, designed to liberate men from the in-betweenness of existence through flight from the world. Modern gnosticism solves the problem through recourse to a surer knowledge of human existence, designed to liberate men from the conditions of existence by changing the world. Whereas the former 'solves' the problem created by the contraction of consciousness through a resymbolization of society and cosmos as evil, the latter 'solves' the problem by attempts at resymbolization of society that deny transcendence."[29]

As Voegelin notes, the modern mass movements are expressed in symbolisms based on two principal sources: the Christian eschatological conception of perfection and the trinitarian symbol of sacred history speculated by the thirteenth century Joachim of Flora. Christian eschatology

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[28] *NSP*, p.29.

[29] Bruce Douglas, "The Gospel and Political Order: Eric Voegelin on the Political Role of Christinaity," *Journal of Politics*, 38:1 (1976), p.41.

embraces: (1) the teleological element--"movement toward the goal of perfection"--which is described by the notion of *sanctificatio*, the sanctification of life, or in English Puritanism, the pilgrim's progress, and (2) the axiological component--the goal itself--which is understood as the *visio beatifica*, salvation, ultimate perfection, or supernatural fulfillment through grace after death in an eternal beyond.[30] In gnostic perfection within the historical world, the teleological and axiological components can be immanentized either separately or together.

The resultant immanentization of them in the various gnostic doctrines thus yields three types of variants of gnosis or ideology. Progressivism is the first type of derivation in which the teleological component is immanentized. Eighteenth century ideas of progress, for example, Kant's or Condorcet's belong to this teleological variants of gnosis. According to the Kantian idea of progress, "humanity is moving in an unending approach toward the goal of a perfect, rational existence in a cosmopolitan society."[31] Utopianism is the second type of derivation in which the axiological component is immanentized. In *Utopia* Thomas More assumes "the form of an ideal image" which expresses conditions for a perfect social order. The third type of derivation in which the two components are immanentized together is Activist Mysticism or Revolutionary

[30] *SPG*, pp.88-89.

[31] Ibid., p.90.

Activism. There exist both the conception of the end goal and knowledge of the methods by which the end goal is to be brought about. Comtean and Marxian thought are the examples of activist mysticism in which the whole Christian symbolism is immanentized to provide a program for the revolutionary transfiguration of man and the world.[32]

In Comte, a final state of industrial society under the temporal rule of the managers and the spiritual rule of positivist intellectuals are the formulation of the state of perfection; in Marx, a final state of classless realm of freedom. "In both cases, there is clarity about the way to perfection: for Comte, through the transformation of man into his highest form, positivist man; for Marx, through the revolution of the proletariat and the transformation of man into the communist superman."[33] What is common in these variants of gnosticism is that they implant "gnostic dream assumptions" which make the root cause of the imbalanced political situation the modern world faces today.

Joachim's trinitarian speculation yields specific symbols employed by modern gnosticism.[34] The Joachitic speculation on the trinitarian symbol is the most important but commonly perverted symbol in that it creates three phases of history according to three ages of man. In the three ages of man, the Father was the dominant symbol of the

[32] E. Sandoz, "The Science and Demonology...," p.118.

[33] *SPG*, p.92.

[34] E. Sandoz, "The Science and Demonology...," p.118.

first realm, the Son ruled the second, and the Holy Spirit was massively present in the third. History is considered to be stages of intelligible fulfillment climaxing in a perfect existence. The underlying notion of making immanent of the holy number three is that of the perfectibility of man. When to the perfectibility of man is added the notion of a legitimate end to striving for the perfectibility, the eschatological expectation is one where man closes down his own history. That is, the eschatological element of the end of history is present. Examples of these symbolization range from the trichotomy of ancient, medieval, and modern history to the Marxian sequence of the Realm of Necessity, the transitional period of Proletarian Revolution and Dictatorship, and the Realm of Freedom (Mature Communism) and to the Comtean Law of the Three Phases--Theological, Metaphysical, and Positivist. Invariably, the three stages are phases of progress, though the content of progress differs from thinker to thinker.

Joachim and those inspired by him looked for the coming of a Third Kingdom of the Spirit in which all Christians would be inspired by the Holy Spirit to the extent that institutional authorities, either secular or ecclesiastical, would no longer be required. Thus, this kind of speculation has served as historical background for such diverse later developments as Renaissance Humanism and the Enlightenment, Hegel's theory of the Absolute Epoch, Comte's theory of a new age of Positive Science, Marx's theory of a transformed

humanity in a Communist society. And the twentieth century saw Hitler's dream of a New Order and *Dritte Reich*, that was to last a thousand years. Another aspect of the trinitarian symbolism is found in the underlying notion in Russian thought that Russia is the "Third Rome," and, as such, it is the heir to the world empire.[35] The Russians have never lost their belief that they are destined to rule the world, and the Marxian ideology is a twentieth-century mode of expression of their brand of Third-Realm eschatology. There was an eschatological element in that the Third Age was the end of history.[36] In Voegelin's view, the "immanentist eschatology" is a feature which varieties of modern gnostic movements have in common. That is, the attempt to create a new world is common to all.

The term "philosophy of history" is commonly taken to mean--from a philodoxic point of view--as an immanentist speculation on the structure of history. The immanentist speculation claims to be able to define the dynamics of history and thereby to predict the pattern in which it will inevitably unfold and disclose its final meaning. Hegel and Marx are probably the most prominent exemplars of this approach, and Voegelin has commented on their thought at length.[37] Hegel, "the intellectual father of both Nietzsche

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[35] *NSP*, pp.114-115.

[36] Ibid., p.112.

[37] See E. Voegelin, "On Hegel: A Study in Sorcery," in J.T. Fraser, F.C. Haber, & G.H. Mueller, eds., *The Study of Time* (New York: Springer Verlag, 1972), pp.418-51; *SPG*; E. Webb, *Eric Voegelin*, p.237.

and Marx,"[38] is the deepest modern gnostic thinker who has promulgated a deformed conception of reality by libidinally ignoring certain elements of humanity. In Hegel a totally new consciousness has arisen: with its rise, history too has come to an end. He assumes that the revelation of God in history is fully comprehensible. But because the revelation is incomplete, he considers it man's duty to complete the incomplete revelation by raising the Logos--reason--to complete clarity in consciousness. "This elevation to consciousness is in fact possible through the mind of the philosopher--concretely, through the mind of Hegel: in the medium of the Hegelian dialectic the revelation of God in history reaches its fulfillment."[39]

The Hegelian assumption of a philosophy of history is that the mystery of revelation and of the course of history can be solved and made fully transparent through the dialectical unfolding of the Logos. Thus Hegel excludes from reality the mystery of a history that wends its way into the future without knowing its end. As we have already seen in a sketch of Voegelin's philosophy of history, "history as a whole is essentially not an object of cognition; the meaning of the whole is not discernible." On the contrary, Hegel constructs a history of man that is fully comprehensible. Voegelin writes:

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[38] G. Sebba, "Order and Disorders of the Soul: Eric Voegelin's Philosophy of History," *Southern Review*, New Series, 3:2 (April 1967), p.305.

[39] *SPG*, pp.105ff.

> Nevertheless, the diremption of Hegel's existence into the true self of the philosopher and the false self of the Messianic sorcerer imposes itself on the work, so that its philosophical excellence become subordinate to the anti-philosophical *Ziel*, to the goal of enabling philosophy at last "to give up its name of a love of knowledge and to become real knowledge (*wirkliches Wissen*)"...The *Ziel* of the *Phenomenology* is the creation of the man-god.[40]

In this respect, Voegelin declares that "we must conclude that in 1807 Hegel has become God."[41] And, after the death of Hegel philosophy "is virtually dead."[42]

At the root of the Marxian idea we find another main representative of "the spiritual disease of the Gnostic revolt."[43] Marx as a "speculative gnostic" has convinced himself that he has penetrated the secret of history and therefore knows the way in which it must go. He advocates activist redemption of man and society and adopts Feuerbach's view that God is but a projection of man's beliefs about what is most valuable in man. Since God exists only in man's imagination, man can, in turn, imagine himself as God. Thus there is hope that man may attain his ultimate objective, namely, to secure in this world an economically satisfactory stateless society of autonomous beings. The perfect society of the classless state will be

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[40] E. Voegelin, "On Hegel: A Study in Sorcery," pp.425-426.

[41] Ibid., p.430.

[42] G. Sebba, "Prelude and Variations of the Theme of Eric Voegelin," E. Sandoz, *Eric Voegelin's Thought*, p.47.

[43] E. Voegelin, *From Enlightenment to Revolution*, hereafter *FETR*, p.298.

achieved through the revolution of the proletariat and the transformation of man into the Communist Superman. But, according to Voegelin, Marx, like all gnostic thinkers, misrepresents the nature of man and for his own purposes deforms the nature of realities. As Voegelin indicates, "some imaginative constructions of history, designed to shield the contracted self, as for instance those of Comte, or Hegel, or Marx, even have grown into social forces of such strength that their conflicts with reality form a substantial part of global politics in our time. The man with a contracted self is as much of a power in society and history as an ordinary man, and sometimes a stronger one. The conflict *with* reality turns out to be a disturbance *within* reality."[44]

This deification of man emanates from the modern depreciation of studies concerned with the nature of man, and the shift of the focus from human nature to the nature as the physical environment. Voegelin believes that the loss of interest in the nature of man "turned to hatred when the nature of man proved to be resistant to the changes dreamed up by intellectuals who want to add the lordship of society and history to the mastery of nature."[45] He contends that there is a "nature of man, a definite structure of existence that puts limits on perfectibility"

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[44] E. Voegelin, "The Eclipse of Reality," in Maurice Natanson, ed., *Phenomenology and Social Reality* (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1970), p.186.

[45] E. Voegelin, "On Classical Studies," *Modern Age*, 17:1 (Winter 1973), p.2.

but the gnostic belief is that the "nature of man can be changed, either through historical evolution or revolutionary action." And this will lead to the "perfect realm of freedom," which is the self-realization of an entelechy that gnostics give to history.[46] But the self-realization of history means the end of the whole process of history, an end to man's striving for anything above himself, and an end to any human endeavor.

Ideology and Gnosticism

In a word, gnosticism is a rebellious will to change reality. "There resulted the phenomenon of the 'second reality' where the spider web of thought replaces a common sense perception of reality."[47] Voegelin has repeatedly shown up this "will to untruth." In the modern gnostic mind, the life of reason, or the *bios theoretikos* is not merely pushed into the background; they are definitely eliminated. For the gnostics "[m]an will be free when he has achieved perfect knowledge of the external world and with perfect knowledge the problem of purpose, which causes indecision, will have disappeared."[48]

> Whether the addiction assumes the forms of libertarianism and asceticism preferred in antiquity, or the modern form of constructing systems which contain the ultimate truth and must be imposed

[46] E. Voegelin, "On Classical Studies," p.3.

[47] G. Niemeyer, "Greatness in Political Science," p.109.

[48] *FETR*, p.268.

> on recalcitrant reality by means of violence, concentration camps, and mass murder, the addict is dispensed from the responsibilities of existence in the cosmos. Since Gnosticism surrounds the *libido dominandi* in man with a halo of spiritualism or idealism, and can always nourish its righteousness by pointing to the evil in the world, no historical end to the attraction is predictable once magic pneumatism has entered history as a mode of existence.[49]

Gnosticism in Voegelin's sense is a stream of thought which becomes progressively immanentized until it leads to the eruption of the totalitarian mass movements of our time. The components of gnosticism are diverse. Voegelin writes:

> By gnostic movements we mean such movements as progressivism, positivism, Marxism, psychoanalysis, communism, fascism, and national socialism. We are not dealing, therefore, in all of these cases with political mass movements. Some of them would more accurately be characterized as intellectual movements--for example, positivism, neo-positivism, and the variants of psychoanalysis. This draws attention to the fact that mass movements do not represent an autonomous phenomenon and that the difference between masses and intellectual elites is perhaps not so great as is conventionally assumed, if indeed it exists at all.[50]

Though enormous and important differences exist between the various modern gnostic symbolisms, what is common for them is that the components of gnosticism, when congealed, produce intense ideologies. For Voegelin, basically all of modern thought is gnostic and ideological. The modern gnostic ideologies especially post-Kantian thought such as

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[49] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.4, *The Ecumenic Age*, hereafter *OH*, IV, p.28.

[50] *SPG*, p.83.

Hegel, Darwin, Marx, Comte, logical positivism, pragmatism and behavioralism consider themselves as adequate substitutes for the Christian symbols for perfection and salvation. Invariably, gnosticism is ardently apocalyptic or secularist. "Gnosticism and ideology (the 'isms') are thus equated: modern gnosis embraces the intellectual and mass movements which dominate life and thought in the present."[51] Voegelin does not provide a definition of ideology. But he has picked out the formulation of one element in it--the misplacement of the ground within an immanent hierarchy of being. He enumerates the elements of ideology:

> In the first place, all ideology comes out of the classic and Christian background (beginning with Enlightenment)--so one element always is the survival of apocalypse, the idea that this present imperfect world is to be followed by a more perfect phase. A second element is gnostic, that is, knowledge of the recipe for bringing about the more perfect realm. (That is gnostic: the recipe) Third, immanentization, as distinguished from older apocalypses. In old apocalypse, the new realm--the fifth monarchy--is brought about by the intervention of God, or by a messenger of God, by an angel. In modern immanentist ideologies, it is always brought about by human action.[52]

Ideology is "the term which Voegelin uses most frequently to describe fundamental distortions of political reality leading to the derailment of political thought and the loss of order in human existence. Ideology is rigid, dogmatic

[51] R. Sandoz, "The Science and Demonology...," p.118.

[52] E. Voegelin, *Conversations with Eric Voegelin*, pp.26-27.

speculations which either omits altogether or hopelessly distorts a segment of existence. Ideology lacks the suppleness to conceive of man as existing in tension toward the ground and as capable of a fall from Being; rather ideology pretends to have a grip on Being and to possess certain knowledge (gnosis) respecting the 'nature' of man, society, and history. Proponents of ideological thinking typically omit either the bodily, material side of human existence (as in utopian speculation) or the noetic and spiritual dimension (as in utilitarian, materialistic, and 'social contract' theories)."[53]

Clearly what Voegelin means by the term ideology is not quite the same as what political positivists refer to the term. This difference, I think, comes from the fact that Voegelin opposes ideology to science in the onto-epistemic sense, or philosophical understanding of man and society. The positivists also contrasts ideology to science.[54]

[53] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's *Anamnesis*," pp.83-84.

[54] The use of the term ideology by political positivists is diverse and sometimes obscure. Many of them are influenced by the Destutt de Tracy's and Marxian concepts which give the wide currency that it now enjoys. Ideology is a beneficial science of ideas as developed in the works of French rationalist de Tracy. The science of ideas (ideo-logy) would demystify society just as natural science had de-mystified nature. For de Tracy, the application of reason (instrumental rationality) to society would eliminate society of the irrational prejudices that had been so noxious in the past. According to the Marxian conception, ideology is connected with idealism which is unfavorably contrasted with materialism: any correct view of the world has to be, in some sense, a materialist view. Ideology is relegated to the superstructure and becomes associated with the ideas, as in the work of Durkheim or Althusser. In the work of Althusser, for example, it is Marxism itself and possibly psychoanalysis. As Seliger defines, ideology is every action-oriented set of beliefs organized into a coherent system. Angus Campbell et al, in their study of voting, elaborate a concept of ideology by suggesting alternative terms, such as "belief systems" or "attitude structure." See L. Althusser, *Lenin and Philosophy* (London: New Left Books, 1971); E. Durkheim, *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*, 2nd ed., (London: Allen Unwin, 1976); M. Seliger, *The Marxist Conception of Ideology* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1977); A. Campbell et al., *The American Voter* (New York: Wiley, 1960); David McLellan, *Ideology* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986).

However, the difference between the two lies in their conceptions of what constitutes the science that oppose ideology. What becomes obvious from these conceptions is that the intrinsic dynamics of ideology, in the measure that it is a willful distortion of reality, requires "more-than-quantifiable insight into the effect of ideology. It requires treatment of the truth and untruth of the ideology."[55] For Voegelin who accepts philosophy and revelation as sources of truth about man and the world, the transformation of political philosophy into ideology is the core of the modern crisis. Ideology is the gnostic delusion which leads, in Voegelin's words, "with increasing theoretical illiteracy to the form of various social idealisms, such as the abolition of war, of unequal distribution of property, of fear and want.

And, finally, immanentization may extend to the complete Christian symbol. The result will then be the active mysticism of a state of perfection, to be achieved through a revolutionary transfiguration of the nature of man, as, for instance, in Marxism."[56] In disavowing ideology, Voegelin assails the disorders of our time. He holds that the remedy against the disorder of modernity is thus philosophical inquiry.

> ideology is existence in rebellion against God and man. It is the violation of the First and Tenth

[55] Theodore Malloch, *Beyond Reductionism*, p.211.

[56] E. Voegelin, quoted in R. Kirk, *Enemies of the Permanent Things*, p.255.

> Commandments, if we want to use the language of the Israelite order; it is the nosos, the disease of the spirit, if we want to use the language of Aeschylus and Plato. Philosophy is the love of being through love of divine Being as the source of its order. The logos of being is the object proper of philosophical inquiry, and the search for truth concerning the order of being cannot be conducted without diagnosing the modes of existence in untruth. The truth of order has to be guided and regained in the perpetual struggle against the fall from it; and the movement toward truth starts from a man's awareness of his existence in untruth. The diagnostic and therapeutic functions are inseparable in philosophy as a form of existence. And ever since Plato, the philosophical inquiry has been one of the means of establishing islands of order in the disorder of the age.[57]

Voegelin considers that the self-centered, egophanic attempt to find salvation within a perfect world, coupled with the hatred for the essence of man and an end to human history, is hardly a reasonable--in the noetic sense--basis for a political philosophy. He contends that the spiritually diseased concept of modern gnosticism must be replaced by the insights of the Platonic-Aristotelian views on the nature of political man in the fullness of his humanity and on what he calls the basic common-sense of much of Anglo-American political thought.[58] Then, here we encounter the question, "If man can be the measure of political order through his tensional experience of the ultimate reality, and if man can be furnished with common-sensical insight, how can he act as a measure of society?" Or, simply, "how can he communicate to others; With the aid

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[57] *OH*, I, p.xiv.

[58] *NSP*, p.189.

of doctrine, or without? Voegelin does not provide any explicit answers. However, his political philosophy implies that a person who experiences his participation in tensional existence necessarily needs doctrine to communicate to others, but that he does not and must not believe it to be the final and ultimate testimony of truth.

It is worth quoting Hallowell's statement: "I think I understand Voegelin's desire to distinguish between existential faith and doctrinal belief: I realize that doctrine divorced from the experience which gave rise to it becomes an empty abstraction and that many doctrinal disputes are much ado about nothing. But is every attempt to express faith in doctrinal form necessarily doommed to become doctrinaire? And how can existential faith be communicated to others without the aid of doctrine? The moment I say 'I believe' and I have begun to enunciate a doctrine. Voegelin himself holds certain convictions which, if stated in a way, would appear to be doctrinaire. A person who espouses a doctrine does not necessarily believe it to be the final and ultimate statement of truth, nor need he hold to that doctrine in a doctrinaire fashion."[59]

The modern gnosticism has been responsible for the derailment of philosophy. In short, a crucial aspect of what Voegelin takes to be the "derailment" of the tradition is the fall of philosophy into the world of gnostic action. He emphasizes that "the history of philosophy is in largest

[59] J.H. Hallowell, "Existence in Tension," p.126.

part the history of its derailment."[60] The moving force in that derailment was "gnostic activism,"[61] and it attempts to emulate God, realize a millennium on earth, and achieve dominion over the world through the transformation of *episteme* into *gnosis*. In its symbolic forms, the "gnostic revolt" is evident from the historical immanentization of Christian eschatology in the speculation of Joachim of Flora, who "created the aggregate of symbols which govern the self-interpretation of modern political society to this day,"[62] through the Enlightenment to Marx. The activist or pragmatic manifestations of the Enlightenment and Marxism involve the French Revolution and the Soviet totalitarian polity.

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[60] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.3, *Plato and Aristotle*, hereafter *OH*, III, p.277.

[61] *FETR*, p.298.

[62] *NSP*, p.111.

2. A GNOSTIC DERAILMENT: THE ENLIGHTENMENT

The political dimension of the crisis of our time is most ostensibly totalitarianism on both the right and the left. In modern political activities, gnosticism complies both manifestations of its left wing and its right: communism and liberalism. "If liberalism is understood as the immanent salvation of man and society, communism certainly is its most radical expression; it is an evolution that was already anticipated by John Stuart Mill's faith in the ultimate advent of communism for mankind."[63] The crisis of modernity is ultimately not simply a problem of politics in the practical world but a crisis of political philosophy. In many respects Voegelin is concerned with the subtle problems that he believes are immanent in modern society and liberal democracy, which, he claims, spring from the same intellectual roots.

The story of political thought from ancient times to the present was one of degeneration within modernity for which the liberalistic tradition was in part responsible. Through its failure to develop a philosophical ground that could justify itself in the face of totalitarian ideologies, liberalism helped to produce the crisis of our time that manifested itself in the totalitarian forces that gave rise to the world wars and now threatened the world in the form of communism. The crisis therefore represents the loss of

[63] E. Voegelin, quoted in R. Kirk, *Enemies of the Permanent Things*, p.255.

both spiritual and political authority in the modern age. "In liberalism can be found all the symptoms of the crisis, such as the decline of the political realm and its subversion by social and private values, relativism and the weakness of political principle, and the historical regime that allowed Nazism to enter the world and that now may be too weak to defend against incursions from the East."[64]

Concerning the equation of liberalism with totalitarian ideologies, Voegelin identifies the internal logic of the liberalist tradition. Liberalism, as Voegelin notes, is a "political movement in the context of the surrounding Western revolutionary movement: its meaning alters with the phases of the surrounding movement."[65] Thus the feature of liberalism changes as liberalism itself changes in the process of history. However, by seizing the proper picture of liberalism, we can best gain access to this constantly changing field of meaning. Liberalism, especially in the political aspect, is commonly understood as the belief in "the redemptive value of a constitutional model constructed in opposition to absolute monarchy and the police state. The pillars of the construction are the demands for basic human rights, the separation of powers and universal suffrage."[66] But this is not the inner logic of liberalism

[64] J.G. Gunnell, *Between Philosophy and Politics: The Alienation of Political Theory* (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1986), p.100.

[65] E. Voegelin, "Liberalism and Its History," trans. by Mary and Keith Algozin, *Review of Politics*, 36:4 (October 1974), p.506.

[66] Ibid., p.515.

but an expression of "the phenomenon of liberalism." In liberalism, while its philosophical underpinnings are in no way completely homogeneous, some fundamental ideas remain constant: (1) the primacy of man's freedom; (2) the priority of individual good over higher good; (3) the belief that man can substantively change the human condition; (4) a rejection of God and religion as ordering forces for the polity. Also in liberalism, states Voegelin, the problem of "permanent revolution" is involved. The nineteenth century liberal Charles Comte (not to be confused with Auguste Comte) developed the program of a liberalism that could carry on the task of permanent revolution. He believed that:

> there were terrible social wrongs under the *ancien regime*, and that the revolution occurred because necessary reforms were not implemented at the proper time. If not enough is done to satisfy the demands of social justice the result is revolution. If in the future we wish to avoid a repetition of the horrible events, then what the revolution achieved by unhappy means must be achieved at the proper time through the less unpleasant means of reform. The revolution must become permanent in the sense that a permanent, flexible politics of reform buys off revolutionary terror. Even though it changed its name, Charles Comte's idea lived on in liberal politics...[67]

Voegelin notes:

> Charles Comte's idea that the goal of the revolution could be achieved through a constant process of reform without the unpleasant side effects belongs in the gnostic-utopian class. It is intimately related to the eighteenth-century progressivist idea, as held by Kant

[67] Ibid., pp.508ff.

> and Condorcet, that a final state of rational humanity can be achieved in a process of infinite approximation. But this cannot be achieved, for man is not only rational but much else besides. Therefore it is no accident that the communist revolutionary took up again the liberal's *revolution permanente*. For in liberalism also there is the irrational element of an eschatological final state, of a society which will produce through its rational methods, without violent disturbances, a condition of everlasting peace.[68]

The problems of liberalism and its intellectual handmaiden, i.e., social science in general and positivistic political inquiry in particular, not only spring from the same intellectual source as totalitarianism but may even anticipate the danger of degenerating into it. From the view of Voegelin's modern gnosticism, it is obvious that the positivistic view of science is a part of modernity, gnosticism, and ideology. And, the premises of political positivism concerning the nature of scientific method, fact and value are dogmatic; that is, they are based on the belief that man's being is not dependent upon transcendent Being but independent of it.

Voegelin's stance on liberalism is endorsed by the works of Hallowell and Spragens. Hallowell addresses in *Main Currents in Modern Political Thought* a crisis in Western civilization caused by what he takes to be the decline of political theory and the perversion of liberalism. Hallowell has pursued the theme of the decline of liberalism, which he attributes to the rise of positivism

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[68] Ibid., p.510.

which is, in turn, linked to the emergence of totalitarianism. For Hallowell, the solution is to reconstruct the liberal political philosophy in terms of new philosophical and theological grounds. Spragens also argues in *The Irony of Liberal Reason* that the modern rationalistic thinker's liberal thought has an epistemology that ("ironically") justifies the Gulag Archipelago. Spragens understands modernity as the unfolding of a logic developed principally by Descartes and Locke and advanced by Condorcet, Hume, Kant, Comte, the Marxists, contemporary positivists and behavioralists, existentialists, and so on. But, as the title of his work connotes, the logic of the modern liberal tradition is ironic: the attempt to project the human will over nature and to liberate man results in his debasement, through a subjugation to those forces that promise knowledge and liberation.

> Liberalism based much of its original optimism on the conviction that autonomous critical reason would--after discrediting repressive superstitions and decadent Scholasticism--establish its humanitarian premises on luminous and secure foundations. Instead, the new reason proved to have a much greater appetite for critical debunking than the liberal reformers had anticipated. After discrediting beliefs the liberals disdained, it turned on beliefs they cherished. By rendering the whole notion of moral knowledge anomalous, by pushing moral claims beyond the pale of reason into the realm of pseudo-propositions, the empiricist conception of human understanding finally undermined the very humanitarian standards it was supposed to have secured for all time. Epistemological revolutions, like their political counterparts, sometimes devour their own children.[69]

[69] T.A. Spragens, *The Irony of Liberal Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981), pp.212ff.

In reverse of the classical understanding of human nature, the kernel of positivistic understanding is the belief that man's being is confined to immanent horizons--horizons within which man and nature are the sole existence. Within these immanent horizons, the sophistication of science--as defined by positivism's reliance on natural-scientific method--allows modern man to increase his control over nature. This increase of man's control over nature parallels the decrease of man's dependence upon transcendent Being--and *ipso facto* man's belief in transcendent Being. To comprehend the perverse impact of the gnostic modern disorder, especially one that emanated from liberalism, to the intellectual and political life in the West afterwards,[70] it is necessary to review Voegelin's critique of gnostic implications of the Enlightenment in his *From Enlightenment to Revolution.*

As Voegelin indicates, the Enlightenment period is one of the major contributing forces to the spiritual crisis of Western civilization. The positivistic scientism is the contemporary outgrowth of the Enlightenment faith that heaven will be built on earth, by man himself, equipped with the tools of science, in its control over nature in technological production. The modern notion of science is thus an expression of the secularist notion of "self-

[70] Liberalism is, as mentioned earlier in the first chapter, generally equated with the Enlightenment. On the equation of liberalism and the Enlightenment, see Chapter One, especially pp.68-74.

salvation." Behavioralism is the dominant version of this notion of science in the American social sciences. According to Voegelin, one of the "symptoms" of the spiritual crisis of Western civilization, symbolized in the Enlightenment is "the reduction of man and his life to the level of material and utilitarian existence through the degeneration of the intellectual and spiritual substance of man."[71] The structure of this crisis is "that of a gradual decomposition of civilizational values, consummated historically by repeated upheavals which destroy, or intend to destroy, the social bearers of the condemned values. Between the upheavals we find periods of stabilization at the respective levels of destruction."[72] One of the peculiar consequences of the crisis is "the necessity of substituting for transcendental reality an intraworldly evocation which is supposed to fulfill the functions of transcendental reality for the immature type of man."[73]

Voegelin describes the Enlightenment as an apostatic revolt which formally abolished Christianity as "the authoritatively unifying spiritual substance of mankind" and which "revealed a movement of ideas which would shape decisively the political structure of the West."[74] In his penetrating critique of the Age of Reason, Voegelin is not

[71] *FETR*, p.95.

[72] Ibid., p.143.

[73] Ibid.

[74] Ibid., p.3.

blind to the weaknesses of Christianity which contributed to the rise of the Enlightenment world view. In the first place, Voegelin argues, Christianity should have come to grips with the new political and national forces of the late medieval period rather than subject them to the power of the Church institution. The resulting struggle ended with the relegation of the Church as spiritual institution to the private sphere, while the autonomous political institutions achieved the monopoly of public realm.

> This privatization of the spirit left the field open for a re-spiritualization of the public sphere from other sources, in the forms of nationalism, humanitarianism, economism both liberal and socialist, biologism and psychologism. The growth of a plurality of counter spirits and counter churches to the traditional spiritual institutions is the most fateful consequences of the failure of the Church to find a compromise with the new pluralistic world of politics.[75]

In the second place, the Church did not adequately cope with the advancement of science. As a result we are confronted with "the spiritual devastation wrought by the wide-spread conviction that rational-scientific approach could be a substitute for the spiritual integration of personality."[76] This creates the problem that the Church is losing its leadership, not only the leadership of the civilizational process itself, but the leadership of the spirit. Finally, there was the unresolved conflict between

[75] Ibid., p.20.

[76] Ibid., pp.20-1.

Christian symbolism and its rational, historical critique. The language of Christianity has become a "myth" as a "consequence of the penetration of our world by a rationalism which destroys the transcendental meanings of symbols taken from the world of the senses."[77] These symbols thus lose their revelatory character. The Church, until recently, showed admirable wisdom in resisting a modern rationalistic interpretation of its symbols, but it was helpless in dealing actively with the attack. "Obviously it is a task that would require a new Thomas rather than a neo-Thomist."[78]

These evident failures of Christianity should challenge Christians to eliminate them, not to abolish Christianity itself. This was the intent of the Enlightenment.[79] Voegelin speaks of the entire development of thought from the start of the modern era through Nietzsche, Marx, Freud, and Lenin, in terms of a process of inversion, of turning matters upside down. Voegelin describes this process of inversion as modern gnosticism because of the rejection of the order of being or the creation order which it implies. Four philosophical or theoretical inversions in the process of the Enlightenment movement will be described: inversion

[77] Ibid., p.21.

[78] Ibid., p.22.

[79] For example, Voltaire, the versatile propagandist of the Enlightenment, was a deist and never gave up his belief in God: "All nature cries out to us that he exists." As a result of deistic principles, throughout his life Voltaire ruthlessly attacked superstition and ecclesiastical domination: he regarded revealed religion as the product of ignorance and deceit, as the work of clever priests making use of human stupidity and prejudice in order to rule over men.

of history, inversion in human nature, inversion in authority, and inversion of the earth.[80]

Voegelin's first illustration is taken from the area of historical reflection, where he compares Jacques Bossuet (1627-1704), the last Augustinian historian, with Francois-Marie Arouet de Voltaire (1694-1778), the first popular modern sophist. In Bossuet's Christian view of history, the universality of history is constituted through the idea of creation and the descent of man from Adam as described in the "sacred history" of Israel. With Voltaire begins "the concerted attack on Christian symbols and the attempt at evoking an image of man in the cosmos under the guidance of intraworldly reason."[81] By him the massive blow against the Augustinian construction, as represented by Bossuet, was delivered. And the attack was conducted primarily on the phenomenal level.[82] With the moderns, the conception of the universality of history is secularized: i.e., the center of universality is shifted from the sacred to the profane, from the divine to the humane level. This shift implies the first revolutionary turning of tables: "the construction of history will, in the future, not be subordinated to the

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[80] In articulating Voegelin's assessment of the Enlightenment, I am indebted to Bernard Zylstra, "Voegelin on Unbelief and Revolution," pp.1-15. Reprinted from *A Statesman to Follow: Commemoration of Groen van Prinsterer* (The Hague: Training Centers of the Anti-Revolutionary Party, the Christian Historical Union, and the Catholic Peoples Party, 1976), pp.191-200. As Zylstra shows, Voegelin sets out the French Revolution of 1789 as a practical instance of great inversion which historically embodied the four philosophical and theoretical inversions.

[81] *FETR*, p.23.

[82] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.2, *The World of the Polis*, p.15.

spiritual drama of humanity, but...Christianity will be understood as an event in history."[83]

At least since the Enlightenment, "the Western world...has come increasingly under the sway of secularism,"[84] which strips religion of its other-worldliness, appropriates it for secular purposes, or seeks to eliminate it altogether. Whereas Christianity understood the meaning of history to be the awarding of salvation, Voltaire saw it as a process by which humankind became "better and happier" through the use of human reason. According to the Enlightenment, language, law, the state, morality, and religion owe their origin to human reason; for example, language was invented by man to communicate his thoughts; the state was organized in order to insure his welfare. Since all these things are the work of reason, the ideal should be to make them more and more rational, to eliminate the irrational and accidental elements that have crept into them and corrupted them in the course of history.

With the mind of the Enlightenment and its unlimited confidence in the redemptive power of unassisted human reason, "an ethics of the Aristotelian type (with a scale of values oriented toward the *bios theoretikos*), or a spiritual morality of the Christian type (determined by the experience of the common ground in a transcendental reality), are

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[83] *FETR*, p.7.

[84] Reinhold Niebuhr, *Christianity and Power Politics* (New York: Scribner, 1940), p.203.

beyond...reach."[85] There emerged the "idea of an autonomous ethics, without religious and metaphysical foundation."[86] Thus the secularization of history is accompanied by a new conception of historical development which, in the words of Voltaire, concerns "the extinction, the renaissance and the progress of the human spirit (*l'esprit humain*)."[87] These words are reminiscent of the Biblical fall, redemption, and final consummation. But the content of these terms is immanent, mundane and intramundane rather than transcendental and sacred. "The *esprit humain* and its changes have become the object of general history. The transcendental pneuma of Christ is replaced by the intramundane spirit of man, and the change of heart by the change of opinion. The *corpus mysticum Christi* has given way to the *corpus mysticum humanitatis*."[88] That is, "[w]hereas God was the primary subject of history according to Christianity, the object of Voltaire's essay was the human spirit."[89]

The notion of extinction, renaissance and progress of the human spirit is a secular equivalent of the gnostic conception of Joachim of Flora. As we have seen, in the Joachitic speculation the three stages of history are phases

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[85] *FETR*, p.81.

[86] Ibid.

[87] Ibid., p.10.

[88] Ibid.

[89] J. Wiser, *Political Philosophy: A History of the Search for Order*, p.243.

of progress and the last stage is marked by spiritual communion without the burdens of institutions and organizations. In the secular versions the basic movement of intra-worldly "progress" descends from the deification of reason and intellect in Voltaire and Comte to the deification of the material, animal basis of existence in Marx. The modern welfare state is the provisional end point of this descent, this "progress." Voegelin speaks of a continuous change within the process of secularization "in accordance with the stream of human nature that commands the attention of the time and becomes the object of the process of deification."[90]

Voegelin develops the theme of the instability of intraworldly sacred histories as a characteristic trait of the new age. He is of the opinion that Bossuet, in his interpretation of the "heresies" of the Reformation, already pointed to the reasons for this instability. It is a consequence of the "initial revolutionary break": "once the authority of the tradition is broken by the individual innovator, the style of individual innovation determines the further course of variations."[91] As a consequence of the "initial break," Western man has in principle turned his back upon the past in order to realize progress in the future. Here lies the problem of the Left in the modern

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[90] *FETR*, p.13.

[91] Ibid., p.14.

age. The Left, writes Kolakowski, "is a movement of negation toward the existent world."[92]

But this ever recurring innovation-as-negation creates a real problem for the innovators, namely that of establishing a spiritual community between individual intellectuals. Bossuet points to this problem in the tension between the authority of the Church and the "individualism" of the reformers. The perfect truth revealed by God has been replaced by the weak production of the human mind so that, with typically modern Christians like Newton, the knowledge of the external world, particularly in astronomy and physics, sets the standard for all our knowledge, including the knowledge of God. Thus the "existence of God" has become a "human persuasion" which has to be filled with a certain satisfying content to make it useful. The real problem with being a Christian in the modern age, therefore, is to avoid filling belief with a subjective, pleasing utilitarian content. At any rate, the dividing of Christianity in numerous factions, each pursuing a different utilitarian content of "faith," is paralleled by the divisions in the political and social realm. Voegelin points out that established communities are "continuously dissolved and broken by the competition of new foundations until the chaotic multiplicity of sects, schools, parties, factions, movements, groupings, associations, communes, is

[92] L. Kolakowski, *Toward a Marxist Humanism: Essay on the Left Today* (New York: Grove Press, 1968), p.68.

reached which characterized European social situation before the outbreak of violence in our time."[93]

The Enlightenment led to a second major inversion, namely inversion in our understanding of human nature, of the direction or goal of man's existence on earth. Voegelin identifies the inversion of the understanding of human nature which was presupposed by the first inversion.

> The rapid descent from reason, through technical and planning intellect, to the economic, psychological and biological levels of human nature, as the dominants in the image of man, is a strong contrast to the imposing stability of the Christian anthropology through eighteen centuries. Once the transcendental anchorage is surrendered, the descent from the rational to the animal nature, so it seems, is inevitable.[94]

From the ontological point of view, the danger in the Enlightenment conception of reason was materialism which explained all phenomena as the results of matter-in-motion. That is, materialism suggested the thought that man is a machine, and the soul is not a separate entity, but a function of the body. The Frenchman Julian Offray de La Mettrie (1709-1751) based his materialism on Descartes' mechanical explanation of the animal organism: if the animal is a machine, why not man?[95] The *philosophes* thought that all mental processes depended on the brain, a certain motion of the brain. The Classical and Christian tradition had

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[93] *FETR*, p.15.

[94] Ibid., p.13.

[95] F. Thilly, *A History of Philosophy*, pp.404-5.

understood that human reason was the means by which humanity participated in a spiritual realm which was beyond the purely immanent, and that what made humanity human was its unique relationship with the divine. On the contrary, the materialist simply redefined the concept in such a way that reason now appeared to be based upon an organization of the material realm itself, and denied the existence of a spiritual reality and, thereby, brought mortals back entirely into the natural realm.

One of the most penetrating analyses of modernity's reduction of man to the animal level of existence, notably in the line of development from Locke, Adam Smith, to Marx, can be found in Hannah Arendt.[96] With regard to this connection, Guillaume Groen Van Prinsterer (1801-76), a Dutch historian and statesman, also detected a constant process of radicalization in the theory and practice of revolution: "The principle of this vaunted philosophy was *the sovereignty of reason*, and the outcome was apostasy from

[96] Hannah Arendt contrasts *vita activa* (the life of public action, or political action), *homo faber* (work), and *animal laborans* (labor). In her anthropology, political activity or the *vita activa* actually constitutes or creates a human nature. Without this activity man is merely a *homo faber* or *animal laborans*, he is not fully human. Arendt believes that the roots of the modern malaise lie in Cartesian doubt and Marxian politics.

With Cartesian doubt man lost faith in the certainty of immortality. Furthermore, according to her, this left man also in doubt about the immortality of the world. Thus the only thing left for man to immortalize is the human species itself. This left the telos of modern society reduced to the mere survival of a species, and thus depreciated modern man to *animal laborans*. Marx's notion of socialized men and violent revolution is the most degenerate manifestation of modern reduction of man to the animal level of existence. For Marx, all of history is the struggle of the worker to achieve his goal of freedom. Thus, Arendt believes that Marx's view of the struggle of the proletariat in history is nothing more than the reduction of all mankind to *animal laborans*. She points out that for the Greeks man was endowed with speech, and thus politics was conducted through discourse. Beginning with moderns like Marx, violence usurps the place of discourse in politics. Thus the modern age has been both the death of the *vita activa* and the death of man as a *homo politicus*. H. Arendt, *The Human Condition* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1958), part III.

God and materialism. That such an outcome was inevitable once the principle had been accepted is demonstrable from the genealogy of ideas."[97]

According to the materialistic view, the phenomena of nature, be they physical or mental, are governed by law, and the mental and moral life of man is necessary product of nature. From this standpoint, Claude Adrien Helvetius, a typical representative of the Age of Reason, explained human morality. He began by defining the human being strictly in terms of physical sensibilities (*sensibilite physique*). Given this, all people were understood to be simply the results of the impressions and experiences to which they had been exposed. Men and women are formed solely by their experience, and inasmuch as all experience is ultimately a matter of physical sensation, human nature is actually created through the administration of pleasure and pain. As a result, Helvetius' materialism led logically to an "ethical utilitarianism."[98] For him, pleasure is the only good. Humanity is a somewhat more simplified being: it has only one love--the love of pleasure. "Knowledge, power, and honor are not sought for themselves but only for the pleasures which they represent."[99] Human beings are good when in the pursuit of their enlightened self-interest they

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[97] G. Groen Van Prinsterer, *Unbelief and Revolution* (Amsterdam: The Groen Van Prinsterer Fund, 1975), p.17.

[98] J. Wiser, *Political Philosophy*, p.240.

[99] Ibid.

actually contribute to the public utility. Thus the greatest happiness of the greatest number became the standard for social justice, and it could be achieved only by creating a stable balance among private interests. Once this balance was achieved, however, Helvetius believed that humankind would move necessarily towards its own immanent perfection and self-fulfillment. In this sense, for Helvetius, "Enlightenment materialism necessarily implied a doctrine of historical progress."[100]

In a discussion of Helvetius' thought, Voegelin shows that Helvetius is no longer capable of understanding the spiritual essence of human life before God since he accepts passions, or *sensibilite physique* as the only moving forces of human existence. Voegelin speaks here of "the inversion of the direction in which the *realissimum* of existence is to be sought." Instead of pursuing *summum bonum*, a higher good, the protagonists of modernity were only interested in avoiding a *summum malum*, a greatest evil---which is, in the final sense, violent death. In terms of this inversion, the internal order--perverted--of human nature becomes clear:

> Whether it be the materialistic, the sensualistic, or the hedonistic variants--the strata of human nature are interpreted genetically as derivatives of a physical or biological substance at the bottom of existence. The internal structure of man is no longer ordered toward a transcendental aim but is to be explained by the operations of physical sensibility or of a pleasure-pain mechanism. This inversion of direction becomes from now on the symbol of the anti-Christian anthropology in politics--whether it assumes

[100] Ibid., p.241.

> the form of economic materialism, or of biologism, or of psychologism.[101]

With the elimination of *summum bonum*, the disorder of the passions and senses is looked upon as normal in the enlightened modern society. This has immense political consequences since the perversion of order is intimately connected with the instrumentalization of man. Man is no longer an entity that has an existential center within itself; it has become a mechanism of pleasure, pain and passions which can be harnessed and instrumentalized by another man. Here we are at the "key point of the anti-Christian attack on the existence of man. Only when the spiritual center of man, through which man is open to the transcendental realissimum, is destroyed can the disorderly aggregate of passions be used as an instrument by the legislator...This is the new basic thesis for collectivism in all its variants, down to the contemporary forms of totalitarianism."[102] But in less extreme forms we are confronted with the same pernicious conception of human personality in the more common forms of managerial and organizational interference with the soul of man in political propaganda, commercial advertising, and education based on a behavioristic psychology of conditioned reflexes.

> This process of general education for the purpose of forming the useful member of society, while neglecting

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[101] *FETR*, p.69.

[102] Ibid., p.70.

> or even deliberately destroying the life of the soul, is accepted as an institution of our modern society so fully that the awareness of the demonism of such interference with the life of the soul on a social mass scale, and of the inevitably following destruction of the spiritual substance of society, is practically dead.[103]

The third inversion is that in authority. In the Biblical view of reality, creation is subject to the authority of the Creator, God. Society finds its foundation in a divinely established order. The Enlightenment, however, eliminated not only tradition but also revelation and a God-given order for creation as sources and standards of authority in society. What has filled this vacuum? The empirical process itself has to furnish the standards. But what moment in the empirical process can do this? Voegelin develops the theme of the "authoritative present":

> This idea [of an authoritative present]...is needed for the adequate expression of intramundane religiousness in politics. A merely empirical present is a brute fact without superior authority in comparison with any past or future present. When the critical standards of civilizational values which stem from the *bios theoretikos* and the life of the spirit are abandoned, when the empirical process itself has to furnish the standards, then a special doctrine is needed to bestow grace on the present and to heighten an otherwise irrelevant situation of fact into a standard by which the past and future can be measured.[104]

Jean Le Rond D'Alembert (1717-1783), an Encyclopedist, provides a good example of this general approach. He

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[103] Ibid.

[104] Ibid., p.84.

derives the idea of justice from a situation of oppression, "from the fundamental experience of revolt against oppression and rejects a religious or metaphysical foundation of morals."[105] Thus the sentiment of revolt overshadows the idea of order. Here, Voegelin seems to have "located one of the roots of Marxism and neo-Marxism, also in its present Christian varieties such as the German political theology and the South American theology of liberation which proceed from the concrete 'now' which is experienced as unjust and oppressive."[106] What is most significant for us to realize--and we can do this more fully in the light of Voegelin's analysis--is the fact that the fundamental themes of the Enlightenment have become so perversive in the twentieth century, both in the communist world and in the capitalist countries, that we are no longer able to distinguish them from radically different Biblical themes. As a matter of fact, "in many instances we have taken over the inversions of the Enlightenment and read them back into the Scriptures. One instance of such *eisegesis* (*inlegkunde*) is the wide-spread habit of looking upon the exodus-theme in the Bible as prior to the creation-theme since the exodus of the people of Israel from Egypt is viewed as a revolutionary response to a concrete situation of oppression. The neglect in Christian circles of the Biblical revelation of reality as creation, as the ordered

[105] Ibid., p.77.

[106] B. Zylstra, "Voegelin on Unbelief...," p.7.

home for man subject to the good law of the Creator, as the cosmos which God so loved that He sent only begotten Son, is one of the indirect results of Enlightenment influences on Christian thought and practices."[107]

If the given order "for" and "of" reality is rejected, then, by what standard can men respond to the experience of injustice and oppression in the "authoritative present"? Here again the notion of progress returns: modern science, technology and industry will supply the material goods for the welfare of all so that empirically justice is done, so that the "needs" of all are fulfilled. In other words, material abundance supposedly will solve the problems of authority and order in society.

The final inversion is that of the earth. The utopian notion of material abundance entails a further inversion, namely one with reference to our understanding of the earth, man's home. In the Christian view of the world, the earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof (Psalm 24). The earth is "the gift of God to man as the field of his sustenance and of his civilizational achievement." It is also "the symbol of the substance from which we come and to which we return bodily."[108] In the Enlightenment, however, with the atrophy of Christianity and the growth of the intramundane ideas of man and mankind, the problem of the earth receives a typical intramundane form as exemplified in

[107] Ibid., p.8.

[108] *FETR*, p.119.

Turgot's *Geographie politique.* In Jacques Turgot (1727-1781), the *mass totale* of mankind had become the substitute for the Christian idea of mankind. The tribe of mankind, the *mass totale* as the secular equivalent of the Body of Christ, has the globe for its habitat, that is, as the object of increased technological exploitation by a mastery of its resources.[109] In other words, for the modern mind the tie that binds men together is no longer the gift of divine grace but the material fruits of the earth. The secular equivalent of unlimited grace is an infinity of material resources, to be acquired by man's conquest of the earth.

But what does material progress offer a substitute for the order of society? Does it eliminate the problem of authority? Of course, it cannot. And for this reason, precisely in an age of industrial progress, spiritual regeneration is the burning question.[110] Voegelin shows how this problem has already come to the fore before the French Revolution, but that it was realized especially by St. Simon and Auguste Comte, who attempted to find an alternative source of order and authority in a new *pouvoir spirituel* of which the bearers would be a new elite, *Fuhrer* of an intraworldly political religion often of nationalistic kind.[111] Mention of an elite places us before the modern

[109] Ibid., p.119.

[110] Ibid., p.85.

[111] Ibid., pp.111-112 and 125.

phenomenon of the masses. In Turgot, the *mass totale* of mankind had become the substitute for the Christian idea of mankind. But in Turgot the intellectuals were the sole barriers of progress. In Condorcet's *Progres de l'Esprit Humain* (1795), the masses have become the object of the elite's dictatorial manipulation so that the entire human race can be the subject of progressive history--a prelude to Marx's conception of the universality of the proletariat. The basis for this expansion of the bearers of progress lies in the perfectibility of human nature, which in effect means a change in man's creaturely condition, the possibility of man's creating anew substance: "the creation of man by God, which was eliminated as a superstition, now returns as the creation of the superman through Marquis de Condorcet (1743-1794). The intramundane hubris of self-salvation culminates logically...in the improvement on God through the creation of a man who does not need salvation."[112]

Marx, in my view, is the most radical proponent in the modern age of man's self-creation and self-salvation. Voegelin identifies it as a swindling, and I therefore consider it utter folly on the part of intellectuals to look upon Marx as a kind of forerunner to the role which Christianity should play in the civilization of our time. In view of the current misunderstandings on this score it is best to do justice to Marx by quoting his own words on the matter of self-creation. In the *Economic and Philosophical*

[112] Ibid., p.134.

Manuscripts, Marx wrote: "Since, however, for socialist man, *the whole of what is called world history* is nothing but the creation of man by human labour, and the emergence of nature for man, he, therefore, has the evident and irrefutable proof of his *self-creation* of his own *origins*."[113] In this passage all of the revolutionary inversions of the Enlightenment are fused in one of the most radical counter-statements of Christian revelation that the modern age has produced.

In Voegelin's view, the fatal error of gnostic theorizing is in the turning away from the transcendent spiritual sustenance offered in the Hellenic and Biblical conceptions and placing confidence in the perversive notion that man has it within his earthly capacity to achieve self-salvation and self-redemption. "The dream of achieving the perfect society through organizing men according to a blueprint instead of forming them in an educational process, is a serious affair," Voegelin contends, for "it is something like the blackmagic of politics. Most appropriately, therefore, the dream of Atlantis rises in luciferic splendor."[114] Also, "the fallacy of gnosis consists in the immanentization of transcendent truth."[115] Stated briefly: "Christ the Redeemer is replaced by the

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[113] *Karl Marx: Early Writings*, trans. and ed. by T. B. Bottomore (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1963), p.166.

[114] *OH*, III, p.209.

[115] *FETR*, p.265.

steam engine as the promise of the realm to come."[116] "The climax of this is the magic dream of creating the Superman, the man-made Being that will succeed the sorry creature of God's making."[117]

Even though there exist enormous and important differences between the various gnostic symbolisms that coexist in modernity, "they all have in common the fallacious attempt to transform the uncertainties and ambiguities of the experience of existence into the certainties of one-dimensional intramundane experience. Out of their anxiety regarding the structure of existence, they create a 'second reality' which gives more assurance to them than the apprehension of the ground of being by faith and analogical reasoning affords."[118] Voegelin's diagnosis of the modern culture is that modern man has disordered notion of what he is and therefore a deformed conception of reality. It is Voegelin's hope that man--especially political philosopher-theorist-scientist--can restore the classical way of life through which he can resist the disorder of his own society.

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[116] Ibid.

[117] Ibid.

[118] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's Contribution to Contemporary Political Theory," *Review of Politics*, 26:3 (July 1964), p.397.

CHAPTER V
A SCOPE OF THE "NEW SCIENCE"

The aim of this chapter is to give some indication of Voegelin's general position in contemporary political science by appreciating the scope of Voegelin's "new science of politics." Every contemporary practitioner of political theory must eventually confront the thought of Eric Voegelin. One may be interested in developing a critique of positivism, in evaluating critically both the methods and the subject matter of political science, in probing the limits of instrumental rationality, in exploring the human nature and the reality of human existence in society and history, in comprehending the relations between knowledge and reality, in penetrating the sources of the disorder of society, or in establishing an ontological basis for political epistemology. If one is interested in any of these issues, then one will eventually delve into the studies launched by Voegelin over the past fifty years.

Voegelin's philosophical science of politics has been hailed and criticized simultaneously. In this chapter, I will examine the assessments of Voegelin's political philosophy both in critical dimensions and constructive dimensions.

1. NEGATIVE/CRITICAL DIMENSIONS

Voegelin can exasperate the advocates of positivistic epistemology. Indeed, Voegelinian philosophical science of politics is obviously "very far from the concerns of the practicing political [positivists] today."[1] The arguments advanced or implied by Voegelin may be disagreeable to modern rationalistic positivists who maintain that men have no souls transcending physical, organic existence, and that there exists no source from which transcendent knowledge can come; and who do not understand the language of philosophical and religious symbols. Many objections can be raised against Voegelin's thesis: the adequacy of his concept of immanentization; the consistency of denying the knowability of the whole meaning of history yet espousing principles of historical order; the tendency to blur objective and subjective categories; the inflation of the concept of gnosticism to polemical proportions.[2] In fact, Voegelin is bound to clash with contemporary political positivists, and he is sometimes regarded as a sort of "intellectual anachronism who is trying to apply the outmoded internecine arguments of the Christian Middle Ages to a modern secular world in which they have no place."[3]

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[1] G. Sebba, "Order and Disorders of the Soul," *Southern Review*, N.S., 3:2 (1967), p.264.

[2] Lee Cameron McDonald, "Voegelin and the Positivists: A New Science of Politics," *Midwest Journal of Political Science*, 1:3-4 (November 1957), p.237.

[3] W. Havard, "Notes on Voegelin's Contribution...," E. Sandoz, *Eric Voegelin's Thought*, p.16.

But, as Lee Cameron McDonald states with regard to the criticisms of Voegelin's philosophy, "The strength of [Voegelin's] position is not that he is invulnerable, but that he is invulnerable to those who refuse to meet him on his own ground."[4]

At any rate, the drawbacks to the Voegelinian philosophical science of politics are clearly discernible to us today. Few people are capable of mastering the multiple fields of discourse essential to such an enterprise; fewer yet are able to bring the resources of one field, bounded by its specialized vocabulary and instrumentalities, into the horizon of another fields. Certainly, Voegelin must be accorded high marks for his efforts, given the level of difficulty generated by the contemporary division of disciplines. He has penetrated a number of fields. His philosophical enterprise regards political science as "a truly integrated discipline, not one isolated from either history or economics, religion or philosophy."[5] Specialists in each area may find much to criticize. But, it should be noted that the mode of philosophical science of politics Voegelin practices generates a scope of discipline unavailable to and untouchable by parochially insulated inquiries, i.e., insulated to the positivistic epistemology. It is worth quoting William Connolly's statement regarding

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[4] L.C. McDonald, "Voegelin and the Positivists," p.234.

[5] Klaus J. Herrmann, "Book Review: Eric Voegelin, Anamnesis, Zur Theorie der Geschichte und Politik," *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 3:3 (September 1970), p. 493.

the scope of discipline which he makes in a commentary on Habermas. In a philosophical, speculative theory, "claims articulated in one domain can be checked for their consistency, or, more permissively, consonance, with assumptions accepted in others. Judgments reached with confidence in one area can be brought to bear on issues posed in more problematic or mysterious areas of a theory. And, since every specialized theory necessarily draws upon uninvestigated assumptions in a variety of allied fields, one could argue that speculative theory, when it is done well, provides more clarity and discipline than theory of the more restrained sort."[6]

Positivism which provides the intellectual foundation of the modern world approaches the political reality from a confined epistemological direction. Scientific epistemology defines truth exclusively in terms of the empirico-positivistic demonstration of validity and therefore accepts nothing as self-evident. The truth or falsity of a proposition requires that meaningful but rigorous concepts possessing methodological significance be used in political studies. Concepts which do not possess those qualities are supposed to be meaningless insofar as their use in a study makes it impossible to prove or disprove the study "scientifically." Thus, concepts relating to values, like those relating to God, transcendence, the ground of being,

[6] William E. Connolly, *Politics and Ambiguity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1987), pp.52-53.

are not to be included in the lexicon of the modern scientist, unless they can be reformulated in a more "operational" form. Therefore, an appeal to a truth that can be reached by *metaleptic* (participatory) experience of ultimate reality makes little sense if one is wedded to a positivistic epistemology. It is only one kind of epistemology, and positivistic knowing is also only one sort of knowledge. Whoever limits what we know to only those things that can be proven positivistically may be foreshortening the realm of knowledge. What is required is to develop a proper understanding of human nature, a tolerance for uncertainty, an openness toward unseen being, the transcendental Beyond, and a recognition that the modern rationalistic way of looking at things is only one way.

In fact, Voegelin's political philosophy reflects "vast erudition and a brilliant, critical mind at work."[7] However, Sandoz indicates that three factors have nurtured Voegelin's relative lack of popularity. First, "much of Voegelin's work has focused on antiquity" with which few practitioners of political inquiry today are familiar. Second, Voegelin ardently "moves at the frontier of knowledge" so that "full appreciation of his work requires the attentive response of an accomplished scholar." And, finally, Voegelin "has created a new language of philosophical discourse."[8] For these reasons, Voegelin's

[7] J.H. Hallowell, "Book Review: The New Science of Politics," *Louisiana Law Review*, 13:3 (March 1953), p.525.

[8] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, pp.10-13.

work must be "read many times with fresh insights." Since the reader of Voegelin stumbles over words like 'retheoretization' and strains to understand the distinction between the 'de-divinization of society' and its 're-divinization,'" often the reader wishes Voegelin "could express himself in simpler language and with less pedantry." But "once the author's vocabulary is mastered the reader is rewarded for his efforts."[9]

To sketch the critical/negative dimensions of critiques against Voegelin's philosophy, we need to examine at this time the appropriateness of the criticism, posed on the basis of the post-positivistic paradigm, of the traditional political theorists including Voegelin. In what has been characterized as the "post-positivist" era--or "post-behavioralist" period in political science--an increasing number of methodological approaches to political science have been proposed as alternatives not only to the discredited positivist paradigm but to the traditionalists. The list of the various denominations of post-positivist philosophy of social science includes phenomenology, a certain branch of philosophy of science, linguistic analysis (or what has come to be known as Wittgensteinian social science), critical theory of the Frankfurt school, structuralism, hermeneutics, ethnomethodology, as well as several offshoots of these approaches. These various sects

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[9] J.H. Hallowell, "Book Review: The New Science of Politics," p.525.

of the post-positivist philosophy of social science are represented as the "restructuring of social and political theory."[10]

First of all, let's turn to a comparison and contrast of Voegelin's thought to post-positivistic trend. There are remarkable similarities between Voegelin and most post-positivists in their political conception and their conception of philosophy. For example, there are similarities between Voegelin and Juergen Habermas, a principal representative of the tradition of "critical theory" established by Horkheimer and Adorno, in that they share a conception of the philosophic intent. Both Voegelin and Habermas reject positivism and modern liberalism; both see the restoration of the connection between theory and practice as the central task of philosophy today; both believe that the central questions are political and that the central political question is the common good; both agree that modern political thought has failed to regain the common good of the political society; both think political inquiry must evaluate on the basic of transcendental standards established through reason; both emphasizes self-reflection.

Admittedly, the major difference between Voegelin and Habermas is that Habermas sees himself as a successor of Marx, whereas Voegelin fundamentally opposes to Marxism which he sees as the modern gnostic project in political

[10] R. Bernstein, *Restructuring of Social and Political Theory*, 1976.

thought. Besides, Habermas rejects classical political insight Voegelin establishes as a standard against which the positivist conception may be judged and criticized. Rejecting classical insight, Habermas argues that the attempt to treat the political order as a symbolization of the cosmological order is itself a mystification which conceals the interest of classical philosophy.

> Theory in the sense of the classical tradition only had an impact on life because it was thought to have discovered in the cosmic order an ideal world structure, including the prototype for the order of the human world. Only as cosmology was theoria capable of orienting action...Theory had educational and cultural implications not because it had freed knowledge from interest. To the contrary, it did so because it derived pseudo-normative power from the concealment of its actual interest.[11]

On the basis of a post-positivistic stance, Scott Warren asserts that traditionalism including Voegelin's philosophy has shortcomings, especially in that it lacks "a dialectical epistemological framework for a critical science of politics, which requires a focus on the unity of theory and practice."[12] Indeed, political scientists who advocate post-positivism or post-behavioralism adopt a principle of dialectic as an alternative to behavioralism and traditionalism. According to them, political inquiry should be engaged in a constant interplay between theory and practice, reflection and action, interpretation and

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[11] J. Habermas, *Knowledge and Human Interest*, p.306.

[12] S. Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical Theory*, p.178.

engagement. Warren alleges that there are crucial similarities between behavioralism and the revived tradition of political theory.[13] For him, what is held in common between the two is an objectivistic conception of reality, either in implicit or in explicit formulations. In traditionalism, says Warren, this seems apparent in the assumption of a permanent and intelligible nature that can be known by reason. Such objectivism runs the risk of denying a concrete dialectic of subject and object where the human subject actually participates in creating reality itself through knowledge and praxis.[14] He simplifies that the quest for objectivity is a quest for an objective standard of truth. According to Warren, Voegelin's thought implies that truth presumes objectivity. Otherwise, the resolution of subject and object would be impossible, since there would be no objective order or truth with which to bring the knowing subject into accord. "With Eric Voegelin, it takes the form of an objectively ordered transcendent-divine ground of being to which the human psyche can 'attune itself.'"[15]

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[13] For example, "both orientations to political inquiry accept a nondialectical separation of the epistemological subject and object, although subject and object are defined differently for each...[B]oth orientations share an objectivistic view of a well-ordered (one might say pre-ordered) reality...[B]oth approaches to understanding political reality possess an abstract quality in their respective endeavors. Behavioralism abstracts itself from the totality of human experience, while traditional political theory often abstracts itself from the concrete, lived world in which we participate every day." Ibid., p.4.

[14] Ibid., p.183.

[15] Ibid.

The critique of Voegelin's political philosophy in terms of the post-positivistic framework was, I believe, a somewhat negative undertaking in that it did not really provide any solutions or alternatives to the problems it surfaced. Rather, the criticism appears to have missed the specificity of Voegelin's philosophical enterprise. The post-positivist criticisms on Voegelin overlook the fact that his emphasis on the onto-experiential conditions results in an understanding of political science that cannot be easily grasped by such conventional conceptual dichotomies as theory-practice and subject-object.

Voegelin's political philosophy is not correctly described by categories which assume a theory-practice dichotomy.[16] Nor can Voegelin's conception of political science be described in terms of the more modern subject-object dichotomy. Given his understanding of noetic consciousness as man's moving response to his being drawn by the divine ground of being, he argues that the human experience of reality is achieved through a process of "consubstantiation" or participation (Plato's *metaxis*, Aristotle's *metalepsis*, and Thomas' *participatio*). The use of the subject-object dichotomy, on the other hand, suggests that reality is most clearly experienced through an act of confrontation in which a skeptical subject confronts and analyzes an indifferent object. Clearly Voegelin's

[16] J.L. Wiser, "Eric Voegelin: A Study in the Renewal of Political Science," *Polity*, 18:2 (1985), p.304.

conception of theory cannot be explained in these terms. He has repeatedly argued that transcendence is neither a thing nor an object. Thus he differentiates between the phenomenal sciences, which can be described in terms of the subject-object dichotomy, and the scientific quest for substance, which cannot.[17] Obviously, those who do not accept Voegelin's distinction, for example, positivists, empiricists, post-positivists, and the various advocates of scientism, have difficulty in acknowledging the epistemic character of Voegelin's work.

Consequently, Voegelin's call for a "new science of politics" not only challenges the way in which political science is practiced today but it also questions those metatheoretical categories by which the practice of political science is interpreted by others.[18] For example, according to Voegelin, a theorist is able to do his work only because he does, in fact, practice a certain way of life, i.e., philosophical inquiry (*zetema*). By attuning himself to the transcendent order of reality, he is able to achieve that conscious participation in being which forms the basis of his knowledge. That knowledge, in turn, accounts for that existential harmony which is characteristic of the philosophical life. Therefore, to do theory is to achieve a specific form of existence-in-truth and philosophy is a way of practicing life. In this sense,

[17] E. Voegelin, "The Origins of Scientism," *Social Research*, 15:4 (1948), p.463.

[18] J.L. Wiser, "Eric Voegelin: A Study in...," p.10.

Voegelin's conception of political science cannot be described in terms of theory-practice dichotomy.

Here, again, the emphasis is upon the necessity for preserving the unity of subject and object, of the soul and God, which is the very life of theophany. Aristotle, according to Voegelin's exegesis, characterizes that unity by appropriating the term, *metalepsis*, or mutual participation. "Thought (*nous*) thinks itself through participation (*metalepsis*) in the object of thought (*noeton*); for it becomes the object of thought (*noetos*) through being touched and thought, so that thought (*nous*) and that which is thought (*noeton*) are the same."[19] In short, the human participates in the divine and the divine in the human *Nous*. Subject and object, soul and God, are logically distinguishable, but actually inseparable. "*Metalepsis* is one of those reverberations of the soul's depth in the conscious subject, and to treat it as 'scientifically' descriptive of a relationship between a definable subject and object would be altogether to misrepresent Aristotle's insight."[20] By positivistically minded scholars *metalepsis* is likely to be treated as a statement of literal fact rather than as a symbol to signify the mutual participation. Voegelin says: "A vision is not a dogma but an event in metaleptic reality which the

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[19] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.4, *The Ecumenic Age*, hereafter *OH*, IV, p.190.

[20] Harold L. Weatherby, "Myth, Fact, and History: Voegelin on Christianity," *Modern Age*, 22:2 (Spring 1978), p.147.

philosopher can do no more than try to understand to the best of his ability. As the vision occurs in the Metaxy, it must not be split into 'object' and 'subject.' There is no 'object' of the vision other than the vision as received; and there is no 'subject' of the vision other than the response in a man's soul to divine presence."[21]

Voegelin's epistemology is subtle. It is not idealistic, for it does not hold that thought is being, or that the mind is trapped inside itself and limited to awareness of its own constructs. Voegelin's analysis emphasizes that our minds cannot get inside their objects. To use Kantian words, there is no intellectual penetration to the *Ding an sich*; as yet, man has no experience of grasping the whatness of anything other than himself "from within," and he comprehends himself only incompletely. Therefore, he cannot define essences; he neither can say that a thing is this or that nor assert that this or that thing is. Voegelin's analysis implicitly rejects the Thomistic thesis that reason abstracts essences, and it repeatedly denies that the symbols created by consciousness in the exegesis of experience represent external realities in themselves.[22] This implies that there is no such thing as objective knowledge. According to Voegelin, once again, transcendence is neither a thing nor an object. The participation in the transcendental becomes luminous through

[21] *OH*, IV, pp.242-243.

[22] J.M. Rhodes, "Voegelin and Christian Faith," *Center Journal*, 2 (Summer 1983), p.65.

a noetic exegesis of man's existence, which belongs to the realm of metaleptic reality. His concept of reality is, therefore, neither the externality of things nor the internality of thought or imagination. Reality is not an object to us, nor is it identifiable with the subject. It is knowable to *nous*, or *episteme*, yet only through the exegesis of the concrete experiences of concrete human beings, existential experiences that are neither idiosyncratic nor explainable in deterministic fashion.

To discern whether Voegelin's political philosophy implies that he is conducting the search for the objective standard of truth as Warren charges, the traditional meaning of philosophy and revelation should also be reexamined asking again whether these sources offer any demonstrable truths. We cannot deny that there are "authentic and politically crucial truths that cannot be demonstrated by what we call scientific method, and it is conceivable that philosophy and revelation are alternative intellectual avenues through which they are really known."[23] However, Warren oversimplifies that traditionalist political theory presupposes objective conception of truth, because he fails to recognize the significant discrepancies between Voegelin's and Strauss' thought. For Strauss, "philosophy, as quest for wisdom, is quest for universal knowledge, for knowledge of the whole."[24] But, as Rhodes expounds,

[23] J.H. Rhodes, "Philosophy, Revelation, and Political Theory," *Journal of Politics*, 49:4 (November 1987), p.1037.

[24] L. Strauss, *What Is Political Philosophy? And Other Studies* (New York: Free Press, 1959), p.11.

Voegelin regards it as improper to formulate abstract definitions of philosophy, and to decree ontologies and methodologies on the basis of a personal preference for sense certainty.[25] "The trouble with Strauss's procedure was that it arbitrarily ignored man's place in being, thus erring and presuming too much. Voegelin found in his early studies of consciousness that we have cognitive access to existence only through our experiences of participation in it."[26]

Warren, as other moderns, understands the somewhat elusive phrases such as "love of the divine sophon (wisdom)," "transcendence," and "the ground of being"--i.e., ingredients of Voegelin's definition of philosophy as symbolized by the Greek philosophers--as a claim that the inquirers acquire "objective knowledge of God." For Strauss thought that any proclamation about the transcendental was obliged "to allude somehow to objectivity."[27] However, the very idea of apprehending objects is one of the misconceptions that Voegelin saw emanating from ignorance of the structure of consciousness. As Rhodes notes properly, "nobody could make headway with the problem of what the Greeks perceived without getting a clearer notion of what

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[25] J.H. Rhodes, "Philosophy, Revelation, and...," p.1045.

[26] Ibid.

[27] L. Strauss, "The Mutual Influence of Theology and Philosophy," *Independent Journal of Philosophy*, 3 (1979), p.114.

occurs in experience."[28] Voegelin's initial investigations of this subject were influenced by Husserl and William James.[29]

The major point of Voegelin's philosophical analysis distinct from Strauss' is that Voegelin's understanding of philosophy does not conceive of "objective knowledge" because philosophy does not experience God, divinity, transcendence, or ultimate reality as independent things or places that exist. For Voegelin, the symbols created by the Greek philosophers are "linguistic indices of the meditative movement"[30] or "markers of processes experienced by man inwardly."[31] Therefore, it is a fatal error to hypostatize, reify, or "thingify" these concepts. Voegelin has always

> warned against hypostatizing or reifying the language of myth, religion and philosophy; he has exhorted his audiences not to mistake terms that communicate experiences for names of objective entities. For example, when Voegelin declared that a philosophy of history would concentrate on what happened in the psyche, or soul, the symbol psyche referred to the classical Greek experience of self as a site of illumination; it did not pertain to a thing attached to the body, divisible into so many parts, etc...A science of politics had to trace order to its origins, which lay where the ground of being touched man; this was why an *episteme politike* had to be a philosophy of consciousness and history...History was identical with experiences of transcendence and participation...The transcendent God could be known only as a movement in man's psyche because the process of the ground took

[28] J.M. Rhodes, "Philosophy, Revelation, and...," p.1046.

[29] In Chapter Two I have already mentioned the influence of Husserl. Concerning William James' influence on Voegelin's thought, see E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, pp.171-177.

[30] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (English), p.175.

[31] J.M. Rhodes, "Philosophy, Revelation, and...," p.1048.

> place only in consciousness, not in the external world and, further, because the human mind had accordingly to its own experiences of the divine, and could not penetrate that reality in such a manner as to grasp it from within.[32]

It should be emphasized that people can know their participatory experiences of transcendent reality but not that substance itself. In short, as Voegelin argues, the resistance to his views can typically be characterized as a sign of failure to grasp his experiential epistemology but, instead, to reify symbols originally intended to represent movements of divine reality in the *metaxy*.[33] Furthermore, the blunder committed by Warren comes from his selection of Straussian philosophy as the representative of traditionalist political philosophy, or, more accurately, his inadvertent oversimplification of the Straussian objectivistic conception of reality as representing the traditionalist epistemology including that of Voegelin. Most commentators whose view is based on the post-positivism fail, as does Warren, to notice the discrepancies between Strauss and Voegelin by overlooking the precision of Voegelin's political epistemology. As Warren confesses, it is certainly "an unforgivable oversimplification to claim that all the critics of behavioralism who emerge from the revival of political theory...could take Strauss as their

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[32] J.H. Rhodes, "Voegelin and Christian Faith," pp.64-66.

[33] Ibid., p.90.

spokesman."[34] It is my contention that Voegelin's philosophical science of politics must not be identified simply as a resident in a traditionalist's house represented by disparaged Straussian political philosophy.

It is worthwhile, at this time, comparing Voegelin and Gadamer. Just as Voegelin endeavored to cast about for an adequate theory of consciousness--as a response to the shortcomings of the various Neo-Kantianisms and of Husserl--as also the most profound twentieth-century hermeneutic philosopher, "Hans-Georg Gadamer sought to free himself from the fetters of Cartesian, Kantian, and Husserlian 'egology.'"[35] Gadamer has also given, like Voegelin, a new life to the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle by striving to reveal the roots of classical philosophy. In the sense that Voegelin affirms two dimensions of the experience of truth that offer a contrast to the model provided by the modern scientific epistemology, his philosophy is equated with Gadamer's.

The first is that truth is an experience, in which the knower is a constitutive element of the knowledge attained.[36] In contrast to the scientific model of objective knowledge which depicts the knower as a passive recipient of knowledge and removed from its object, both

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[34] S. Warren, *The Emergence of Dialectical Theory*, p.16.

[35] Frederick Lawrence, "Voegelin and Theology as Hermeneutical and Political," J. Kirby & W.M. Thompson, eds., *Voegelin and the Theologian*, p.316.

[36] Susan Hekman, "From Epistemology to Ontology: Gadamer's Hermeneutics and Wittgensteinian Social Science," *Human Studies*, 6 (1983), p.208.

Voegelin's theory of consciousness and Gadamer's analysis of the aesthetic experience reveal the knower as an active participant in the process. Second, both Voegelin's and Gadamer's analyses reveal that truth has an ontological dimension.[37] The positivistic epistemology describes the act of knowing as strictly epistemological, that is, concerned solely with the constitution of the object of knowledge. But both Voegelin's and Gadamer's analyses reveal that knowledge involves the grasping of an object that is simultaneously revealing itself to the knower. That is, ontology precedes epistemology; the act of knowing entails that being is revealed.

Although there are some areas of agreement between Voegelin's approach and the hermeneutic approach of Gadamer, however, there remains discrepancy. What is to be noted is that there is nothing in Gadamer like Voegelin's treatment of the pneumatic differentiation of consciousness as complementary to the noetic differentiation.[38] If we compare their respective treatments of Hegel overall, the major differences in tone and purport can hardly be overlooked. In a commentary on the comparison between Voegelin and Gadamer, Frederick Lawrence expresses this point very succinctly.

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[37] Ibid.

[38] F. Lawrence, "Voegelin and Theology...," pp.327-328.
Concerning the contrast and complementarity of pneumatic and noetic modes of differentiation, see E. Sandoz, "Eric Voegelin and the Nature of Philosophy," *Modern Age*, 13:2 (Spring 1969), pp.157-59.

> For Voegelin, Hegel is a prime example of pneumo-pathology: Hegel not only as a promoter of 'second reality,' but as a conscious sorcerer and magician as well. This does not mean that Gadamer for his part disregards Hegel's failure in the direction of what Heidegger termed oblivion of being. But he is mainly out to make the best of Hegel, to show that even when he sells language out to logic and objectifying subjectivism, Hegel belies something of the significance of language in spite of himself...Voegelin conceives of [Hegel] as surveying the history of symbolization in order 'to diagnose the syndromes of untrue existence' and 'to initiate, if possible, a healing process.' The issue for him is the order or disorder within man and society. Gadamer thinks of [Hegel] more in terms of applying the truth of the tradition to the present.[39]

2. CONSTRUCTIVE DIMENSIONS

In the previous chapters we have seen that Voegelin's political philosophy has much to offer the contemporary discipline of political study. It constitutes a landmark in political theory. By establishing a "new science of politics," Voegelin's political philosophy redefines the proper scope and method of contemporary political inquiry. The major concern of Voegelin is "restoration of political science" which means "a return to the consciousness of principles, not perhaps a return to the specific content of an earlier attempt."[40] The "new science of politics" thus really means the restoration of the old great tradition of political science, as exemplified by Plato and Aristotle.

[39] F. Lawrence, "Voegelin and Theology...," pp.327-328.

[40] E. Voegelin, *The New Science of Politics*, hereafter *NSP*, p.2.

However, Voegelin is not concerned with reconstructing "Platonic philosophy" or "doctrine," but rather with the way in which Plato sought to resist the disorder of his own society and "his effort to restore the order of Hellenic civilization through love of wisdom,"[41] because one "cannot restore political science today through Platonism, Augustinianism, or Hegelianism."[42] He declares that "political science cannot be restored to the dignity of a theoretical science in the strict sense by means of a literary renaissance of philosophical achievements of the past; the principles must be regained by a work of theoretization."[43]

Indeed, the "new science of politics" would be the first comprehensive, authentic, and committed effort since Aristotle and one that is free of "the ideological mortgages on the work of science"[44] that have been the characteristic of positivistic tradition. The "new science" is, I believe, the most important and unique twentieth-century philosophical insights embodying an onto-theological orientation and capable of offering a "new," "revolutionary," and "restoring" understanding of the nature of political knowledge and reality.

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[41] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.3, *Plato and Aristotle*, hereafter *OH*, III, p.5.

[42] *NSP*, p.2.

[43] Ibid.

[44] E. Voegelin, *Order and History*, vol.1, *Israel and Revelation*, p.xii.

Among the admirers of Voegelin's philosophy, however, there is a controversy on the "revolutionary" character of his enterprise. Gerhart Niemeyer queries the title of Sandoz's biographical introduction to Voegelin's enterprise, *The Voegelinian Revolution.* Niemeyer asserts that Sandoz's claims to "revolution" on behalf of Voegelin do not fit.[45] Here it is required to refer to the distinction between normal and revolutionary science which had been the linchpin of Kuhn's theory of scientific change. Kuhn explains great revolutions in natural science, such as the Copernican, Newtonian, and Einsteinian revolutions. These revolutions occurred as the result of crises that arise when phenomena cannot be explained in terms of the basic postulates of the established science, hence are treated as anomalies, and new basic postulates are required. The new basic postulates that are devised to explain what were previously to be anomalous become the core of a new scientific "paradigm."[46] And, as a conceding response to his critics, Kuhn acknowledges in his essay "Reflections on My Critics," that all normal science would, to some unspecified degree, be revolutionary, because small-scale mini-revolutions occur frequently in the history of science.[47] That is, Kuhn's

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[45] G. Niemeyer, "Book Review: The Voegelinian Revolution," *Review of Politics*, 45:1 (January 1983), pp.134-35.

[46] T. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970).

[47] T. Kuhn, "Reflections on My Critics," in Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds., *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp.249-50.

account of scientific change has been transformed into a theory of permanent revolution.[48] Viewed from the Kuhnian conception of scientific revolutions, however, Sandoz's illustration of the revolutionary quality of Voegelin's work is adequate and justifiable. Furthermore, with regard to Sandoz's reference to the "Voegelinian Revolution," Ronald Puhek affirms that "Sandoz deliberately uses the word revolution in a special sense. Obviously, Voegelin has not--at least not yet--produced a revolution in political science. Sandoz does not imply he has, but argues that Voegelin's thought is itself a revolution."[49] Sandoz writes:

> For Voegelin is neither an eccentric nor merely a maverick. He is a genuinely revolutionary figure whose "new science of politics" cuts to the very roots of tendencies in the humane disciplines which have grown over a period of centuries. Any scientific revolution is difficult to effect, as the history of Einsteinian physics attests. The task is doubly difficult in the philosophical sciences which so immediately confront the passions of men and the weight of intellectual vested interests...[Voegelin] does not speak the language of a political science establishment dedicated to scientism and dogmatically committed to quantification of the subject matter of politics in the positivistic mode--and equally committed to the neglect of those sectors of political reality which do not lend themselves to treatment by this method.[50]

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[48] Terence Ball, "Is There Progress in Political Science?," in T. Ball, ed., *Idioms of Inquiry: Critique and Renewal in Political Science* (Albany,NY: SUNY Press, 1987), p.19.

[49] R. Puhek, "Book Review: The Voegelinian Revolution," *American Political Science Review*, 74:4 (December 1982), p.970.

[50] E. Sandoz, "The Science and Demonology of Politics," *Intercollegiate Review*, 5:2 (Winter 1968-1969), p.121.

Moreover, we can discern twofold features of what is revolutionary in Voegelinian philosophical science of politics in relation to political inquiry. First, it is the recovery of ontology as the basis of epistemology. In political positivism as scientism and scientific epistemology, ontological issues are ignored or the ontology of man is defined in terms of the epistemological model of the physical sciences. It is ignorant of man as a self-reflective being capable of participating in the tensional existence. If the aim of political inquiry is to make a theoretical framework of the nature of political things as they are, scientific epistemology takes for granted the fundamental ontological difference between what is uniquely human and what is merely natural, organic, or artificial. However, political positivism inevitably results in a false immanentized eschatology of techniques for the same reason that it is ignorant of the primacy of ontology over epistemology. And, second, what is radical and revolutionary in Voegelinian political philosophy is the self-examination of consciousness itself as human existential experience.

Voegelin draws up a comprehensive program for the "new science":

> The understanding of ontology as well as the craftsmanship of metaphysical speculation had to be regained, and especially philosophical anthropology as a science had to be re-established. By the standards thus regained it was possible to define with precision the technical points of irrationality in the positivistic position. For this purpose the works of

> the leading positivistic thinkers had to be analyzed with care in order to find their critical rejections of rational arguments; one had, for instance, to show the passages in the works of Comte and Marx where these thinkers recognized the validity of metaphysical questions but refused to consider them because such consideration would make their irrational opining impossible. When the study proceeded further to the motivations of irrationalism, positivistic thinking had to be determined as a variant of theologizing, again on the basis of the sources; and the underlying religious experiences had to be diagnosed. This diagnosis could be conducted successfully only if a general theory of religious phenomena was sufficiently elaborated to allow the subsumption of the concrete case under a type. The further generalization concerning the connection of degrees of rationality with religious experiences, and the comparison with Greek and Christian instances, required a renewed study of Greek philosophy that would bring out the connection between the unfolding of Greek metaphysics and the religious experiences of the philosophers who developed it; and a further study of medieval metaphysics had to establish the corresponding connection for the Christian case. It had, moreover, to demonstrate the characteristic differences between Greek and Christian metaphysics which could be attributed to the religious differences. And when all these preparatory studies were made, when critical concepts for treatment of the problems were formed, and the propositions were supported by the sources, the final task had to be faced of searching for a theoretically intelligible order of history into which these variegated phenomena could be organized.[51]

This statement both describes what has been done and sketches what needs to be done. Voegelin's articulation of the "new science" on behalf of classical political philosophy is sufficient for exposing the theoretical narrowness and inadequacies of positivistic dogma and scientific epistemology in political study. Voegelin's experiential epistemology of transcendental truth proved that "there could be knowledge of right order, thus rescuing

[51] *NSP*, pp.25-6.

politics from the dead-end of positivism."[52] Voegelin's philosophical enterprise finds that positivistic epistemology in political inquiry not only neglects but in fact defies the onto-theological grounds of political life.

Moreover, positivism is, in its effects and uses, as Voegelin notes, a modern form of gnosticism for it connotes "abolishing the constitution of being, with its origins in divine, transcendent being, and replacing it with world-immanent order of being, the perfection of which lies in the realm of human action."[53] The destructive effect of modern positivistic tradition stems from the fact that positivism, itself an ideology, is grimly resolved to exclude from reality what nevertheless is part of reality, and to forbid to inquirers any search about questions which nevertheless are being asked. From positions of exalted academic prestige they control research and ban anything resembling Plato's *episteme politike*. In positivistic political inquiry, the eclipse of onto-theological grounds of political life has meant not only the divorce of political life from ultimate, divine purpose but also, subsequently, the establishment of human power as the primary and, ultimately, the only purpose of politics. The point of Voegelin's perspective is that political positivism, regardless of whether or not the practicing inquirers are

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[52] J.M. Rhodes, "Voegelin and Christian Faith," *Center Journal*, 2 (Summer 1983), p.60.

[53] E. Voegelin, *Science, Politics, and Gnosticism*, trans. by William J. Fitzpatrick (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1968), p.99. Hereafter *SPG*.

aware of it, propagandizes its own theoretical assumption--only the factual is real--and, therefore, promulgates the view that only libido dominandi is the proper subject of intellectual analysis. In the name of science--in the modern rationalistic sense--the science of philosophical questioning is itself challenged as pseudo-science or non-science, and the human experience of a transcendent Being is defined as superstition. It is an abominable irony!

For Voegelin the current dominance of positivism in political inquiry is a self-willed restriction in the scope of discourse. The consequence of the restriction is that the contemporary discipline of political inquiry cannot account for its own significance. On the other hand, it fails to train citizens to reflect upon the *agathon*, to develop values, and to act according to them. It assumes that values and purposes are merely subjective "givens" rather than difficult discoveries dependent upon the endless and arduous development of each person's humanity gained through a process of existential tension. Once theory is destroyed, however, its reconstruction is extremely difficult.

By developing an onto-epistemic framework of a philosophical science of politics, Voegelin has really given us a new, deeper, and more accurate reading of Plato and Aristotle. The analysis of the thought of Plato and Aristotle reflects a brilliant, subtle mind and displays an erudition that few scholars can match. It is a remarkable

intellectual achievement; but more importantly it is, along with his other enterprises, an adventure in philosophy not unlike the one undertaken by Plato himself. "Like Plato, Voegelin is intent upon helping us, if we want to be helped, to turn around toward the true source of order. He shows us how Plato and Aristotle responded to the disorder of their times by cultivating the reason that was solicited by the divine reason to acknowledge the good as the ground of all being. Voegelin does not claim, as Plato did not claim, to know the ultimate truth."[54]

Voegelin has rediscovered and restored the science of politics on the basis of "critical, theoretical standards for the interpretation of human existence," thereby enabling us to make value distinctions regarding political order not as a matter of sheer opinion but of strictly disciplined theory.[55] Voegelin's great achievement is to have restored the "scientific" character of political science, *episteme politike*, the science of order turning on speculations about transcendent reality. Science in onto-epistemic sense always rests on a foundation of existential experience. Political science is no exception.[56] The establishment of *episteme politike* implies a realization that being in the world is contingent on the transcendent source of being

[54] J.H. Hallowell, "Existence in Tension," in S.A. McKnight, ed., *Eric Voegelin's Search for Order in History*, p.121.

[55] G. Niemeyer, "Greatness in Political Science: Eric Voegelin (1901-1985)," *Modern Age*, 29:2 (Spring 1985), p.108.

[56] G. Niemeyer, "Eric Voegelin's Achievement," *Modern Age*, 11 (1965), p.135.

which is the source of its order. For Plato and Aristotle, *episteme politike*, authentic political knowledge, was based on the dependence of earthly being on transcendent Being. In short, Voegelinian "new science" is a "science of man," science of the human being, more particularly, science of human consciousness. In the "new science," to "understand the various historical forms societies take, it is necessary to understand the experience of order they are based on." Thus, "the heart of the 'new science' is the experiential rather than the experimental; it focuses on the experience of peoples past and on the experience of the political scientist present."[57]

Assailing the "disorders" of our time in his works, Voegelin holds that, as we have witnessed earlier, the remedy against the disorder of modernity is philosophical inquiry. He considers that most comprehensive knowledge of political reality is attained primarily through the philosophical investigation (*zetema*), in which the subject of the *zetema* is man the political living being in the fullness of his humanity.[58] The objective of the *zetema* is the reality sought and known as a fragment of any aspect of the whole existent truth, and the purpose of the knowledge gained is to assist man to live in a well-ordered and happy community with his fellows.[59]

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[57] R.E. Puhek, "Book Review: The Voegleinian Revolution," *American Political Science Review*, 74:4 (December 1982), p.970.

[58] *OH*, III, pp.81-88.

[59] Ibid., pp.320-21.

In this respect, political philosophy in the classical sense is necessarily a detached criticism of every conventional regime, historically existing society. It explains oppression; it explains why rulers tend to become tyrants; it explains why society always tries to dominate individuals. For the healthy soul is the standard for the judgment of societies and the key to understanding them. And political philosophy must be necessarily evaluative. The politics of the soul is also a negative wisdom which advises us not to expect perfect conditions in any society, a temptation especially strong in today's developing countries, because nothing can be permanent, or perfect in time. The great task of political philosophy is, thus, to correctly direct the course of personal salvation through this world of affairs and into the beyond. And the task of political philosophy in societal salvation or saving societies can be accomplished through personal salvation or saving individual souls. However, what has afflicted human beings for two millennia in political history is the fact that the gnostic deformation of eschatological consciousness accompanies the growth of this awareness from its beginning. The "parallel process" is still obscure in many respects, so obscure in fact that even its reality is doubted. Voegelin goes on to say that the "attempt to come to grips with the problems of personal and social order when it is disrupted by gnosticism...has not been very successful because the

philosophical knowledge that would be required for the purpose has itself been destroyed by the prevailing intellectual climate. The struggle against the consequences of gnosticism is being conducted in the very language of gnosticism."[60]

[60] *SPG*, p.vi.

CONCLUSION

The leitmotif of this dissertation is to criticize positivistic epistemology in political inquiry on behalf of the reconstruction of Eric Voegelin's philosophical science of politics. In this dissertation I have attempted to explicate the development of Eric Voegelin's philosophical science of politics and establish its significance for political inquiry. Since my primary intention is to elucidate Voegelin's thought as best as I understand it and to draw out its implications to the nature of political knowledge and reality, my treatment of his work has been more expository than polemical.

I have emphasized that Voegelin's political philosophy provides not only the foundation of political society, but also guidance and direction for the political inquiry. Eric Voegelin's contribution to contemporary political theory is "to have made a philosophically profound and superbly creative effort to restore the tradition of political theory as an experiential science of right order in our time."[1] Indeed, Voegelin's philosophical science of politics is an "empirical" undertaking, not in the empirico-positivistic

[1] D. Germino, "Eric Voegelin's Contribution to Contemporary Political Theory," *Review of Politics*, 26:3 (July 1964), p.399.

sense but in the sense that it is an investigation of experiences by which man seeks to become aware of the ground of being as such. This conception of experience, or empirical, is sharply distinct from that of positivistic scientism. Experience to Voegelin embraces man's participation in multiple dimensions of reality. It includes confrontations and relations that extend far beyond the limits of sense perception. Reality, according to Voegelin, lies in the man's experience of order, the experience which requires that the man's soul be open to the divine, transcendent. The experience of order confirms the existence of order, or of what Voegelin frequently calls the divine ground of being. "It is Voegelin's contention that order in history depends upon the recognition of the transcendental source of order; disorder is engendered by the "immanentization" of this source."[2] It is essential to recognize that Voegelin conceives of political theory not as an ideology, utopia, or scientific methodology, but as an experiential science of right order in the soul and in society.

To quote Sandoz, "[t]he experiential foundation of the science of politics, and the very source of scientific objectivity, is man's prescientific participation in all of the realms of being from the somatic and simply sentient to moral, aesthetic and mystical levels of experience. This existential participation is the means whereby man attunes

[2] Stanley Rosen, "Order and History," *Review of Metaphysics*, 12:2 (December 1958), p.257.

himself with reality and gains the primordial grip on the whole of being which is the foundation of all knowledge."[3] As Walker Percy, a Catholic novelist, recognizes, "there is a metascientific, metacultural reality, an order of being apart from the scientific and cultural symbols with which it is grasped and expressed."[4] There is a prescientific or "common sense"[5] knowledge of political reality that constitutes the beginning and the basis of any more sophisticated political knowledge. Reliance of political philosophy upon prescientific or "common sense" is "not uncritical, but it is not superficial. To attain knowledge about politics, one must attend closely to the actual experience of citizens and to the symbols with which they themselves interpret that experience."[6]

I have described Voegelinian philosophical science of politics as a new, revolutionary way of political inquiry. What is needed in the modern age which has no "theory of man as man" is a radically "new anthropology."[7] Voegelinian philosophical science of politics, i.e., noetic science, "signals the abandonment of the sciences of the external

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[3] E. Sandoz, "The Philosophical Science of Politics Beyond Behavioralism," in G.J. Graham & G.W. Carey, eds., *The Post-Behavioral Era*, p.298.

[4] Walker Percy, *The Message in the Bottle: How Queer Man Is, How Queer Language Is, and What One Has to Do with the Other* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1975), p.242.

[5] With regard to the appreciation of the concept "common sense," see E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, pp.19, 29, & 164.

[6] Douglas Sturm, "Politics and Divinity," *Thought*, 52:207 (December 1977), p.348.

[7] Cecil L. Eubanks, "Walker Percy: Eschatology and the Politics of Grace," Jac Tharpe, ed., *Walker Percy: Art and Ethics* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 1980), p.122.

world as the model of the science of man. It proffers science in a new mode."[8] "The Voegelinian Revolution...is more than a new science of politics. It is a comprehensive new science of man..."[9] The centerpiece of Voegelin's political philosophy is his theory of consciousness. Voegelin writes: "Consciousness is the luminous center radiating the concrete order of human existence into society and history. A philosophy is empirical--in the pregnant sense of an inquiry into the experiences which penetrate the whole area of reality that we express by the symbol 'man' with their order. The work of this philosophy requires...the constant exchange between studies on concrete cases of order and analyses of consciousness which make the human order in society and history intelligible. Since the analyses of consciousness presupposes the historical phenomena of order...a series of special studies...want to stress the close empirical correlation between the analysis of consciousness and the phenomena of order. As the consciousness is the center that radiates the concrete order of human existence into society and history, so the empiricism of social and historical phenomena of order reaches into the empiricism of consciousness and its experiences of participation."[10]

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[8] E. Sandoz, *The Voegelinian Revolution*, p.199.

[9] Ibid., p.188.

[10] E. Voegelin, *Anamnesis* (German), pp.8-9. The Foreword to *Anamnesis* is translated and reprinted in *The Beginning and the Beyond; Papers from the Gadamer and Voegelin Conferences Supplementary Issue of Lonergan Workshop*, vol.4, ed. by Fred Lawrence (Chico, CA: Scholars Press, 1984), p.36.

I also have attempted to illuminate his political philosophy by contrasting it to the modern rationalistic-positivistic epistemology. I have noted a failure on the part of most practitioners of political positivism to investigate political reality, a failure that I believe makes the contemporary study of politics obsolete and incomplete. What I have stressed in the Introduction and Chapter One is that the advocates of political positivism affirm the primacy of epistemology. The epistemological authority of modern rationalistic-positivistic tradition was modern science. The positivistic epistemology is based on the inherent position that ontology is unnecessary for growth in knowledge or understanding of political reality. Therefore, the practitioners of political positivism assume that progress in political science depends essentially on the articulation of a positivistic epistemological foundation for the enterprises. But the primacy of epistemology manifests itself in the "method fetishism,"[11] in the belief that the perfection of instruments of analysis, e.g., the rules of logic, test procedures, computer programs, will allow the practitioners to seek truth out of their encounters with the world. The absurd level of the positivistic epistemology is most dramatically expressed in the inability of modern scientists to place their discoveries in the context of human life.

[11] Hilary Putnam, *Reason, Truth, and History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p.188.

On the contrary, the key conception underlying Voegelin's philosophical science is the harmonizing of ontology with epistemology. In his reading of classical Greek thought, to which he has repeatedly referred as an example of "a truly relevant political science," political science is both a cognitive and an existential--that is, an epistemological and an ontological--achievement. The kind of knowledge required in order to judge correctly among opinions about the good is possible only if one achieves that form of existence in which the measure of reality becomes known through man's self-conscious participation in its order. From this perspective, then, cognitive insight is an existential event and the "knowledge" gained by such an insight can be properly understood by another only if he is capable of systematically experiencing the event itself.[12] Thus, according to Voegelin, a theorist-philosopher-scientist is able to do his work only because he does, in fact, practice a certain way of life, i.e., *zetema*. By attuning himself to the transcendent order of reality, he is able to achieve that conscious participation in being which forms the basis of his knowledge. That knowledge, in turn, accounts for that existential harmony which is characteristic of the philosophical life.

Philosophy, Voegelin emphatically and repeatedly insists, is "not a proof for the existence of God, for a

[12] James Wiser, "Eric Voegelin: A Study in the Renewal of Political Science," *Polity*, 18:2 (Winter, 1985), p.302.

Prime Mover, for Spirit, or for Natural Right. Such a proof is not necessary, and when offered merely occasions counter-claims. It is not necessary, because philosophy is, or originates in, the experience of order."[13] Philosophy is clarified by the notion of the *metaxy*. The content of philosophy is the soul's tension toward the divine, a relationship which by its nature of flux and uncertainty can only be symbolized and never made fixed in propositions. Therefore, Voegelin contends that philosophy is a search for order; that the source of order is the divine ground; that man possesses the faculty for communicating with or participating in the divine.

To Voegelin, political "philosophy," political "science" and political "theory" are inseparably bound together. The object of the critical reflection induced by the activity of *theoria* is *episteme politike*. Therefore, without an ontologically grounded theory of politics, a fully developed political science is impossible. When political science is fully developed, it will contain a comprehensive inventory of all the relevant problems. Such an inventory can be organized under three headings: ethics, politics proper, and history. Today, for the first time in centuries, the materials are available and the intellectual climate is suitable for great advances in the theoretical analysis of politics. These advances presuppose a recovery of the achievements of the Platonic-Aristotelian *episteme*,

[13] Patrick Coby, "Book Review: *Anamnesis* (English)," *The Thomist*, 44:3 (July 1980), p.461.

nearly lost during the period since 1500, a period which has witnessed the triumph of fallacious gnostic symbolizations.

By probing to those experiences which lie at the center of our disorder, in the individual soul as well as society, Voegelin's analysis of gnostic deformation of reality, human consciousness, and history "becomes both a model for future scholarship and a noetic evocation to join in the search for the true source of our order."[14] Voegelin is a paradigmatic scholar, philosopher, and historian, one of the most profound explorers of political reality. "It is only fair to surmise that Voegelin's name will acquire ever-greater luster in the years ahead."[15]

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[14] Michael Dillon, "Symbolization and the Search for Order," *The Intercollegiate Review*, 11:2 (Winter-Spring, 1976), pp.105ff.

[15] Robert Nisbet, "Eric Voegelin's Vision: Book Review," *The Public Interest*, 71 (Spring 1983), p.112.

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DOCTORAL EXAMINATION AND DISSERTATION REPORT

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Title of Dissertation: Reality and Knowledge in Voegelin's Political Philosophy

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Major Professor and Chairman

Dean of the Graduate School

EXAMINING COMMITTEE:

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